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King calls King Fahd, Mubarak

AMMAN (Petra) — His Majesty King Hussein on Monday called Saudi King Fahd Ben Abdul Aziz to check on his health. The two leaders also discussed the peace process and voiced hope for the success of the London talks between the U.S. and the Palestinian and Israeli leaders. King Hussein also telephoned Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak to congratulate him on his birthday. The King and President Mubarak discussed the latest developments in the peace process, particularly on the Palestinian-Israeli track.

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Mideast talks teetering as Albright extends sessions

LONDON (AP) — Mideast peace talks teetered between breakdown and breakthrough Monday as U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright scheduled extra rounds of separate talks with the Israeli and Palestinian leaders.

"We are hoping for the best and preparing for the worst," said Ms. Albright's spokesman, James Rubin, as the Americans prepared a second round of separate meetings with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Palestinian President Yasser Arafat. All three leaders postponed scheduled departures until Tuesday, as they struggled to prevent the peace process from collapsing.

"Clearly the timetable has been extended," Mr. Rubin said. "We are ever so slightly more hopeful." But he told reporters that "we do not have compelling evidence the meetings will yield a breakthrough" and warned of "grave risks of disillusionment and violence in the Middle East."

Mr. Netanyahu, who began the day saying he did not expect much progress, softened his tone after an unexpectedly long 4 1/2-hour meeting with Ms. Albright. He said he anticipated meeting again Monday night with Ms. Albright, and possibly with Mr. Arafat.

"We want to bring about a breakthrough. We also want to bring about an end to the suffering and the conflict between the two peoples," Mr. Netanyahu said.

None of the officials cited specific progress in the talks, which originally were not scheduled to include direct face-to-face discussions between Mr. Netanyahu and Mr. Arafat. The Palestinian and Israeli leaders first met separately with British Prime Minister Tony Blair, who was hosting the meetings, and then in turn with Ms. Albright, the principal mediator.

Mr. Arafat looked grim as he returned to his hotel after meeting for 90 minutes with Ms. Albright during the afternoon.

The Palestinian leader agreed to a request from Ms. Albright to remain an



Palestinian President Yasser Arafat is greeted by British Prime Minister Tony Blair before their talks at 10 Downing Street Monday (Reuters photo)

'We'll topple Netanyahu if he gives up territory'

TEL AVIV (AP) — Right-wing Israeli lawmakers threatened Monday to topple Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's government if any more West Bank land is transferred to the Palestinians.

The warning came as Mr. Netanyahu was about to meet U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright in London to discuss the scope of the next Israeli withdrawal in the West Bank.

"We have decided to vote for a no-confidence motion to bring down the government because this withdrawal will be irreversible," said Michael Kleiner, head of a group of right-wing legislators called the Land of Israel Front.

Mr. Kleiner's group claims to have the support of at least 17 of the 120 members of parliament, some of them coalition members from the National Religious Party. It could theoretically tip the balance against the government in a no-confidence vote.

Settler leader Aharon Dombi warned Monday that even an 11 per cent withdrawal would "isolate more than 20 settlements in a sea of Palestinians." Interviewed on Israel Radio, Mr. Dombi called the autonomy accord a "satanic act" that was "amputating legs and other parts of the [biblical] Land of Israel."

A morning session with Mr. Blair, and did not speak to reporters after his later meeting with Ms. Albright.

"For the moment, no progress yet," Mr. Arafat told reporters as he left Downing Street. He attacked Mr. Netanyahu for continuing to allow new Jewish settlements on the occupied West Bank, and urged him to accept the American withdrawal plan.

"Mr. Netanyahu will have to bear the responsibility of the repercussions and the chaos that will ensue because of the breakdown of the peace process because of his negative attitude to the American proposal," Mr. Arafat said.

"If Prime Minister Netanyahu is seriously concerned and interested in peace, today is the day, now is the moment," he said.

In letter of reply King hails Prince Hassan's 'relentless efforts' in the service of the nation

AMMAN (Petra) — His Majesty King Hussein Monday sent a letter to HRH Crown Prince Hassan praising the Prince's efforts in the service of the nation and pledging continued efforts to ensure further accomplishments for the Kingdom.

"The march is long and arduous, and our aspirations are limitless," the King said in the letter, a reply to one sent by Prince Hassan to the King on the 45th anniversary of the Monarchs' assumption of his constitutional powers.

"But Jordan has made major strides and many achievements," he said.

"We cannot deny the sacrifices and efforts of the pioneers, who had accompanied the late King Abdullah, the founder of the Kingdom, and the late King Talal and then joined me in the march of independence, stability and the struggle for a better future."

"Thank God Jordan has been built in the manner we had desired... an oasis of security and stability, with the Jordanian people enjoying freedom,

democracy and their human rights," the King continued.

"Jordan is pursuing the march of construction, a march whose principles had been laid down by the fathers who had offered enormous sacrifices

'Jordan is pursuing the march of construction, a march whose principles had been laid down by the fathers'

for the nation."

Expressing his thanks to the Crown Prince and the Jordanian people for their good wishes, the King said: "I seize this opportunity to send my greetings and express my pride in and appreciation of the Jordanian family whose members continue to act in cohesion and social solidarity and who uphold their affiliation to the dear

homeland."

"You have always stood by me as a true Hashemite, Arab and Jordanian, equipped with knowledge, and dedicated yourself to the attainment of Jordan's aspirations turning Jordan into a model for others and an object of pride to all of us."

The past four-and-a-half decades, the King said, were a journey rich with events, war and peace, delight and misery, sweet and bitter situations; but full of hope.

"I used to draw resolve from faith in God and our confidence in the principles of the Great Arab Revolt and in the faith in the Jordanian people who rallied around me, as a one family."

King Hussein said he took pride in Prince Hassan's relentless efforts which, he said, "will be remembered by your brothers and countrymen who deeply appreciate your sacrifice and your great endeavours for the nation."

Lawzi: None charged for involvement in car incidents, probe continues

By Tareq Ayyoub
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — A senior government official on Monday said that the investigation of suspects on alleged involvement in a recent spate of car bombings in Amman did not prove that a particular party or country is linked to these incidents.

Acting Minister of Information Nasser Lawzi said that dozens of people were arrested and interrogated in the past few days over the different incidents in and around Amman but none of those interrogated was charged.

Mr. Lawzi added that several people were released after interrogation but others were still in custody, adding that "arrests are taking place according to the need of the investigation."

"Those arrests are linked to the recent explosions in

Amman especially the latest one which took place on Thursday at Jerusalem Hotel," Mr. Lawzi told the Jordan Times.

"Until now we have no evidence to link any political organisation or group to these incidents. We do not want to jump into conclusions. As soon as we find something we will announce it," the minister said.

A previously unknown group issued a statement in the Lebanese capital declaring its responsibility for the explosions and threatening to carry more attacks.

The explosion occurred three hours after a celebration at another hotel commemorating the 50th anniversary of the creation of the Jewish state.

Mr. Lawzi said the statement by Abu Thar Al Ghafari group lacks credibility. "The statement was inaccurate on the site where

the explosion took place, the timing and the damages that occurred," the minister said.

The explosion at Jerusalem Hotel followed a series of bombings that targeted the car of the former head of the General Intelligence Department, Mohammad Rasoul Kilani, the car of the former interior minister, Jawdat Shoul, the residence of Major General Yousef Gassous, director general of the Royal Medical Services.

Mr. Lawzi did not see any connection between these incidents.

"The bombings are only symbolic of their (perpetrators') ability to plant such explosions in public places and their ability to repeat such acts," he added.

"We are dealing with them as crimes irrespective of being organised or not," the minister added.

"It is unrealistic to make a connection between what happened in the past six months. Some of them are personal, others are aimed at destabilising security and others are linked to other parties," he said.

Mr. Lawzi denied complaints by the families of the detainees that police forces were using "cruel" methods while interrogating them.

The minister ruled out allegations made by political activists that the arrests were intended to prevent those detained from holding rallies to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the loss of Palestine in 1948.

"The arrests were made because we have information that these people might have some role in the recent explosions. We are not arresting people who want to hold any rally or demonstration," he added.

Iraq criticises Arab states for abiding by embargo

BAGHDAD (AFP) — Iraqi Deputy Prime Minister Tareq Aziz has criticised Arab states for not breaking the U.N. embargo in force against Iraq since its August 1990 invasion of Kuwait, newspapers reported Monday.

"What we are asking Arab countries is to stop respecting the embargo," he said late Sunday at a conference of Arab political parties and trade unions held here in support of Iraq.

"What right do the Arabs have to state they are respecting international law when it is no more than an American decision?" Mr. Aziz asked, referring to Washington's insistence on keeping the sanctions in place.

"Arab governments are helping the United States to maintain embargoes against Iraq, Libya and Sudan" with "all their talk about international law and calls for Iraq to implement [U.N.] Security Council resolutions," he said.

Kabbani laid to rest



The coffin of Nizar Kabbani is carried shoulders high during his funeral procession which was attended by more than 10,000 mourners in Damascus Monday (AFP photo)

AMMAN (J.T.) — Deputising for His Majesty King Hussein, Jordan's Ambassador to Syria Nasouh Majali extended on Monday the King's condolences to the Kabbani family over the death of Nizar Kabbani, the famous Arab poet. His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan also sent a condolence cable.

Kabbani, whose poems about love and freedom of women enthralled millions,

was buried Monday in a funeral attended by thousands of Syrians including sobbing women sprinkling jasmine flowers on his coffin.

Ordinary Syrians, writers and poets walked in the three-hour funeral procession that started from the house of Kabbani's oldest brother, Mu'taz.

The poet was buried at the Old Shaghour cemetery in the old part of Damascus where

his parents and son Tawfiq are also buried. He is survived by another son Omar and daughters, Hadha and Zainab.

The great poet died of a heart attack at the age of 75 at his London home on Thursday.

Kabbani, a former diplomat, published more than two dozen books of poems and was a frequent contributor to the London-based Al Hayat newspaper.

Sudanese peace talks open amid accusations

NAIROBI (AFP) — Sudanese peace talks started in Nairobi on Monday but appeared doomed, with the southern rebels accusing Khartoum of using food as a weapon of war.

Kenyan Foreign Minister Bonaya Godana, who is chairing the three-day conference, noted gloomily in his opening address that the two sides had refused to alter their stands on separation of the state and religion, and self-determination for the largely Christian and animist south.

It was those two "critical issues," he noted, which led to the failure of the last round of talks, held in Nairobi last October and November.

Mr. Godana described the stand-off as "unfortunate."

U.N. Secretary-General Kofi Annan, in Nairobi on an eight-nation African tour, told journalists that it "may take a while to find a solution" to the "protracted conflict."

But he said the Sudanese government's decision to put Foreign Minister Mustafa Osman Ismail at the head of its delegation showed "a new level of seriousness," and added that the government had agreed to remove all impediments to aid flights.

relief operations.

The Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) declared in a statement signed by spokesman John Luk Jok that "hundreds of thousands of people are starving to death due to famine" and warned that it could not allow the situation to continue "without taking action."

In accusations reminiscent of those levelled at the Nigerian government during the 1967-70 Biafran war, the SPLA charged that the Khartoum regime was carrying out a "scorched-earth" policy and imposing frequent bans on the relief flights.

And, in what appeared to be a sign of the SPLA's confidence in its military strength, Mr. Jok announced that it had released 800 prisoners of war, of whom only 91 had elected to return to the regime.

Mr. Godana declared that an urgent solution needed to be found to end the 15-year-old civil war, which is estimated to have cost a million lives in Africa's largest country through fighting, disease and starvation.

The Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) delegation is headed by Nihal Deng Nihal, the SPLA "governor" of the southern Bahr El Ghazal state.

An SPLA source told AFP that Mr. Nihal was leading the delegation because long-time SPLA leader John Garang's

second-in-command, Salva Kiir, who has traditionally led SPLA delegations to peace talks, had more important matters to attend to.

That indicated low expectations on the SPLA's part, and in Khartoum. Ali Al Haj Mohammad, the deputy secretary general of the Sudanese National Congress, was quoted by the official government press on April 25 as saying that "the Sudanese people hope that positive results will be reached, but they should not expect too much of this round of talks."

The talks are being held under the auspices of the regional Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD), with the other active members — Djibouti, Ethiopia, Eritrea and Uganda — represented by ministers.

Italian Ambassador Alberto Balboni, the chairman of the IGAD Partners' Group, which also comprises the United States, Canada, the Netherlands, Switzerland, the European Commission and the UN Development Programme, urged the delegations to take a "constructive attitude," saying the group's governments and people were following the "tragedy" in Sudan with deep concern.

The face-to-face talks were adjourned to a secret venue after the brief opening ceremony at the Kenyatta International Conference Centre.

Hizbollah chief blasts United States over terrorism report

BEIRUT (AP) — The head of the Islamic movement Hizbollah, branded a terrorist group in a U.S. State Department report, said it was America that was the biggest terrorist nation in the world.

"The U.S. administration considers anyone that does not follow its policy a terrorist," Sheikh Hassan Nasrallah, leader of Hizbollah, told a rally of about 10,000 people.

The U.S. State Department's annual report on terrorism issued Thursday listed Iran as the world's "most active" sponsor of terrorism and of planning and executing terrorist acts through surrogates, such as the Shiite Muslim Hizbollah.

"We reject America's self-designation of the leadership of mankind... and say in return that the United States of America is the sponsor of terrorism. Moreover, it is the most terrorist country in the whole world," Sheikh Nasrallah said.

Hizbollah has led the fight to try to oust Israeli forces from southern Lebanon, and Sheikh Nasrallah said this objective cannot be called terrorism.

"Hizbollah is a terrorist group because, according to the report, it is fighting the Israeli occupation army and its proxy militia."

"We are terrorist because we are fighting an occupation army and its militia," Sheikh Nasrallah told the rally in the Bir Al Abed suburb south of Beirut.

The rally was to commemorate the martyrdom of the Muslim leader, Imam Hussein, in a battle in southern Iraq during a dispute over the leadership of Islam. Hussein, a grandson of Prophet Muhammad, was killed by rivals along with 70 followers.

Hizbollah, or Party of God, has been fighting 1,500 Israeli soldiers and 2,500 allied militiamen of the South Lebanon Army in an Israeli-occupied enclave in South Lebanon that occupies nearly one-tenth of the country.

Israel first invaded Lebanon in 1978 to push back Palestinian guerrillas, then returned in 1982 to again rout the Palestinians, only to bog down in battles with Lebanese guerrillas, primarily the Hizbollah.

Today, fighters of Hizbollah attack Israel's occupying soldiers almost daily.

Iran releases four Palestinians

TEHRAN (AP) — Iran released four Palestinians, imprisoned since their capture during the 1980-88 war with Iraq, at the request of the visiting leader of the Hamas group, the official Islamic Republic News Agency (IRNA) reported Monday.

The prisoners, who fought for Iraq in the war, later met with Sheikh Ahmed Yassin, the Hamas founder who is on a week-long visit to Tehran, the agency said.

Sheikh Yassin thanked Iran's supreme leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, and Iranian President Mohammad Khatami for securing release of the Palestinian prisoners, it said.

Sheikh Yassin's visit was the first public trip to Iran by a leader of the Palestinian organisation.

IRNA said the Palestinians would be reunited with the families in the next few days, but did not say where. Their names were not given.

The London-headquartered Al Hayat daily said the Palestinians would be sent to Iraq. The report could not be confirmed independently.

Sheikh Yassin, a 61-year-old quadriplegic, arrived last Tuesday and was expected to leave Monday for Syria.

He earlier visited Egypt, Saudi Arabia and Qatar and also is due to visit Pakistan and Malaysia.

Iran and Hamas reject the Israeli-Palestinian peace agreements. They contend the pacts will not lead to the return of occupied Palestinian land and want Palestinian President Yasser Arafat to return to armed struggle.

Maimed Hizbollah member tells of Israeli bombing mission

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (AP) — A Lebanese man severely maimed while preparing an anti-Israeli bomb attack in an Arab east Jerusalem hotel in April 1996 said Sunday he was a Hizbollah member and that he did not regret his actions.

Hussein Migdad — who lost his right, two legs and an arm — told Israel's Channel 2 television that he was a member of the Lebanese Hizbollah group which had given him a stolen British passport to help him launch the attack.

"My mission was to send a message to the Israeli army to make them stop their shelling and occupation of Lebanon," said Mr. Migdad, who refused to express misgivings for the mission.

Channel Two said Mr. Migdad planned a spectacular bomb attack in Tel Aviv and that he had been given explosives by two contacts in Arab east Jerusalem.

It said he had arrived in Tel Aviv from Zurich, and that he had managed to pass through Swiss and Israeli customs carrying detonators to be used in an attack.

Mr. Migdad said he had no idea what happened when his room at Arab east Jerusalem's Lawrence Hotel was destroyed by a bomb explosion on April 12, causing him the severe injuries.

But the television said two clients in adjoining rooms of the hotel mysteriously disappeared minutes before the blast.

An Israeli anti-terrorism official refused to say whether Mr. Migdad had been set up with a booby-trapped device.

The television report also accused the Iranian embassy in Beirut of funding the attack and providing the stolen British passport in the name of Andrew Charles Jonathan Newman.

Mr. Migdad is currently still in custody in an Israeli military hospital.

Turkish court sends scandal case back to parliament

ISTANBUL (AP) — A state security court on Monday threw the case of a key figure in a scandal over ties between the state and the underworld back to the parliament.

The court said it has no jurisdiction over senior government officials such as former Turkish Interior Minister Mehmet Agar.

The decision means parliament will have to reopen the investigation and vote on whether Agar's case should be sent instead to the supreme court.

The new inquiry could take at least two months.

Parliament lifted Agar's legislative immunity in December along with another deputy, Sedat Bucak, also accused in the case. In February, he was charged forming a criminal gang, hiding a fugitive and abusing his powers. He faces up to 15 years in prison if convicted.

Agar was accused of using his position as the nation's police chief to help terrorists and hitmen involved in gangland killings. Bucak, who heads a pro-government Kurdish militia, was accused of covering up drug and gun smuggling. Bucak faces up to 20 years in prison. He is also accused of possessing a large number of weapons, including machine guns.

The two deputies are the most prominent figures implicated in a wide-ranging, state-underworld scandal that came to light after a 1996 car crash.

The accident killed a fugitive terrorist and a police chief, injured Bucak and raised questions about why all three men were travelling in the same car.



PROTEST IN MOROCCO: A Moroccan TV journalist holding a picture of King Hassan II and draped in the Moroccan flag Monday is restrained by firemen as he tries to hang himself from the building that houses the national press union in Rabat in protest against social injustice in his field (AFP photo)

Pro-Iraq Egyptian party files lawsuit against London, Washington

CAIRO (AFP) — A pro-Iraqi, anti-Western Egyptian party on Monday filed a lawsuit against the United States and Britain, demanding \$180 million in compensation for their hostility towards Iraq.

The leader of the Misr Al Fata (Young Egypt), Al Wassef Eid Al Wassef, in a petition to a Cairo court demanded "S180 million for the governments of Egypt and Iraq as compensation from the United States and Britain."

Mr. Wassef stressed that his request "falls in line with international law and the Egyptian penal code."

The compensation money would be split evenly between Cairo and Baghdad and "represents the same amount of money which the United States and Britain are demanding from the Arab Gulf states to finance (Western) troop dispatches" to the Gulf region at the end of last year, Mr. Wassef said.

"Recent British and U.S. troop build-ups in the Gulf have heavily undermined the economies of regional countries, including Egypt, because they dissuaded tourists and investors from coming."

"This gives Cairo and Baghdad the right to be compensated," Mr. Wassef said.

Mr. Wassef said his demand for compensation became more pressing after the U.N. Security Council last week renewed sanctions against Baghdad "under U.S. and British pressure."

A verdict is expected next week.

Egyptian security court confirms death sentences of Islamists

CAIRO (AP) — An Egyptian court on Monday confirmed death sentences issued against two Islamists, including Mustafa Hamza, who tops Egypt's most-wanted list.

The Supreme State Security Court also sentenced three defendants to life in prison at hard labour and 11 others to prison terms of up to 15 years. Six defendants were acquitted.

One of the defendants, 14-year-old Omar Qumb Raghib, was sentenced to five years in prison.

For Hamza, who was tried and sentenced in absentia, it was the third death sentence issued against him.

Hamza, believed to be living in Afghanistan, is among Egypt's most wanted Islamists. He was convicted in 1992 and 1993 cases and has been accused of having a role in the 1995 assassination attempt against Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak in Ethiopia.

Also sentenced to death was Sa'id Abdul Hakim Mustafa, who was in the courtroom.

The prisoners welcomed the verdicts with cheers and unfurled a banner saying: "We ask God to be martyrs."

Another banner read: "Wait for us, you the judges of injustice, when we will build palaces out of your skulls and turn rivers into blood." The death sentences were handed down last month, but had to be confirmed after review by Egypt's mufti, Nasr Farid Wasel.

The government's chief cleric must endorse death penalties before they are final.

The defendants were convicted of belonging to the outlawed Al Gamaa Al Islamiya, or the Islamic group, attempting to incite civil unrest and attacking tourists, police and government officials.

The Islamic group has been blamed for much of the violence in a six-year campaign by Islamists to overthrow Egypt's secular government and replace it with strict Islamic rule.

More than 1,200 people have died in the violence, most of them police and Islamists.

Monday's sentencing marked the third time this year that Egyptian courts have handed down death sentences against Islamists.

South Lebanon ceasefire meeting underway

NAQOURA (AFP) — International monitors met here Monday to discuss 10 complaints of south Lebanon ceasefire violations lodged by the Lebanese and the Israelis, officials said.

The international monitoring panel convened at 11:00 a.m. at the headquarters of the U.N. peacekeeping force in the coastal town of Naqoura near the Lebanese-Israeli border, the officials said.

Lebanon has filed six complaints over Israeli shelling that wounded five civilians, including three children, according to the Lebanese delegation.

Among the injured children was a two-year-old girl who previously had both legs amputated after an Israeli bombardment in April 1996.

Israel lodged four complaints, accusing guerrillas of Hizbollah movement of launching attacks from residential areas.

According to the terms of the 1996 truce between Israel and Hizbollah, attacks may not be launched from civilian areas, nor may they target civilians.

AIDS victims, relatives sue Iran's blood transfusion organisation

TEHRAN (AFP) — A number of Iranians infected with the AIDS virus through blood transfusion and their relatives have filed a suit against Iran's Blood Transfusion Organisation (IBTO), a newspaper reported Monday.

Hearings began in the case at a special court in Tehran, where three women, five men, four adolescents and two children appeared along with a number of IBTO officials, Resalat newspaper said.

An elderly man complained that his 24-year-old daughter had died of AIDS after being injected with blood provided by the organisation, it said.

Another plaintiff said he and his brother, both haemophiliacs, had been infected with the Human Immune-Deficiency Virus (HIV), which can lead to AIDS, after receiving domestically-produced blood.

"My brother has already died, leaving his family without a source of income," said the man, who was not identified.

An elderly woman who had developed full-blown AIDS following a blood transfusion said her "reputation is all destroyed" and called for the culprits to be given the "maximum punishment."

A mother said two of her children, both haemophiliacs, had also developed AIDS after receiving blood.

They all blamed the IBTO and the health ministry for their plight and complained that no insurance company or government agency was prepared to pay for their treatment.

According to official figures, around 1,230 Iranians, mostly intravenous drug users, have been diagnosed as carriers of the HIV virus, 186 of whom have developed full-blown Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS).

A total of 155 people have died of the disease.

The first case of the disease was recorded in 1985, a one-year-old baby who received a transfusion of imported blood.

The Iranian authorities have banned blood imports since then.

NEWS IN BRIEF

boy's corpse on fire, newspapers said.

Palestinians get \$25 million U.N. loan

RAMALLAH (AFP) — A U.N. agriculture agency has agreed to loan the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) \$25 million to help develop small-scale farming, Palestinian officials said Monday. Representatives of the International Agricultural Fund and Palestinian Finance Minister Mohammad Nashashibi were due to sign the loan agreement at a ceremony Monday night in Ramallah, a spokesman for Mr. Nashashibi said.

Five Egyptians hanged for murder

CAIRO (AFP) — Egyptian prison authorities on Sunday executed by hanging five men convicted of killing a teenager, a jeweller and a baker in separate attacks, the government press reported on Monday. Hussein Abdul Zaher had been found guilty of kidnapping and killing Amr Abdul Razak in 1990 after sexually abusing him. His crime completed, he set the

JORDAN TELEVISION

Tel. 773111-19

PROGRAMME TWO

15:10Cartoon — Pro Stars

16:10 Small Talk — "Quiz Show"

16:00Drama Borderown

16:30 Doc. — The Health Show

17:00Route of Capricorn

18:00French Programme

19:00Le Journal

19:15French Programme

19:30News headlines

19:35 Step by Step — "Three Girls and Baby"

20:00What Would You Do?

20:30Drama — Rhodes

22:00News in English

22:30 Feature Film — "Dr. Giggles"

23:59Metro Cafe

00:30End of T.N.

PRAYER TIMES

04:16Fajr

05:42(Sunrise) Doha

12:32Dhuhr

16:12Asr

19:23Maghreb

20:49Isha

CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church
Sweifeh, Tel. 5920740
Assemblies of God Church Tel.

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology

The effect of the heat wave will continue for three days more where it will be hot and dry with temperatures higher than average by ten degrees centigrade.

Clouds will appear at different altitudes and winds southeasterly moderate to active. In Aqaba, it will be hot, dry, and dusty, winds southerly moderate to active, and sea calm.

Amman18/35

Aqaba23/40

Deserts15/36

Jordan Valley24/42

Yesterday's high temperatures: Amman 36, Aqaba 39 Humidity readings: Amman 15 per cent, Aqaba 22 per cent.

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

NIGHT DUTY

AMMAN:

Dr. Mukhlis Mazharah 5820425

Dr. Wissam Hazyin 748563

Dr. Abdul Hadi Tayyir 4620115

Dr. Munther Al Qralni 779959

Ferdows pharmacy778336

Al Asema pharmacy4637055

Al Salum pharmacy4636730

Yacoub pharmacy4644945

Shmeisani pharmacy4637660

Nairoukh pharmacy4623672

IRBID:

Dr. Ghazi Ta'ameh28080

Al Quds pharmacy4623672

ZARQA:

Dr. Salah Saffarini987565

Khalifah pharmacy985417

EMERGENCIES

Food Control Centre4637111

Civil Defence Department 5661111

Civil Defence Immediate Rescue4630341

Civil Defence Emergency199

Rescue Police 192 462111, 4637777

Fire Brigade4617101

Blood Bank775121

Highway Police843402

Traffic Police896390

Public Security Dept.4630321

Hotel Complaints5605900

Price Complaints5661176

Water & Sewerage Complaints 287267

Amman Municipality Complaints787111

Telephone Information (directory assistance)121

Overseas Calls010230

Central Amman Telephone Repairs4623101

Abdali Tel. Repairs5661101

Radio Television773111

Jordan Jordan774111

Water Authority5680100

J. Electricity Authority815615

Electric Power Co.4636381

RJ Flight Information44-53200

Queen Alia Int. Airport44-53200

HOSPITALS

AMMAN:

The Arab Centre for Heart and Special Surgery5921199

The Islamic Abdi5666137

Husseini Medical Centre Tel. 836813, 856856

Luzmila4630195

Khalidi Maternity46428116

Akileh Maternity46424112

Jabal Amman Maternity4642362

Malhas, J. Amman4636140

Palestine, Shmeisani5607071

Shmeisani Hospital5669131

University Hospital5353444

Al-Muasher Hospital 56672279

Al-Ahli, Abdali56641646

Italian, Al-Muhajreen 771011/3

Al-Bashir775111/26

Army, Marka891611/15

Queen Alia Hospital 5602340/30

Amal Hospital5674155

ZARQA:

Zarqa Govt. Hospital09/983323

Zarqa National Hospital09/980560

Ibn Sina Hospital09/986732

Al Hikma Modern Hospital09/990999

IRBID:

Princess Basma Hospital02/275555

Greek Catholic Hospital02/272275

Ibn Al Nafees Hospital02/247100

AQABA:

Princess Haya Hospital03/314111

FOR THE TRAVELLER

QUEEN ALIA AIRPORT

ARRIVALS

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights

07:30Damascus (RJ)

08:15Aqaba (add) (RJ)

10:20Abu Dhabi (RJ)

10:25Beirut (RJ)

10:40Muscat, Dubai (RJ)

10:50Doha, Bahrain (RJ)

17:05Cairo (RJ)

18:30Chicago, Amsterdam (RJ)

19:00 ..London, Frankfurt (RJ)

Other Flights

13:00Riyadh (SV)

13:30Aden (TY)

14:25Munich (LH)

15:00Istanbul (TK)

18:05Kiev (6U)

18:30Dubai, Damascus (EK)

19:00Paris (AF)

20:25Tel Aviv (LY)

21:10Beirut (ME)

21:40Cairo (MS)

23:35Larnaca (CY)

23:40Amsterdam (KL)

00:55Bucharest (RO)

03:00Rome (AZ)

04:25London (BC)

Royal Wings (RW) Flights

10:20 Aqaba (arriving at QAIA and proceeding to Marka Airport) (RW)

19:20 Tel Aviv (arriving at QAIA) (RW)

23:25 Aqaba (arriving at Marka Airport) (RW)

DEPARTURES

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights

06:00Aqaba (add) (RJ)

06:45Beirut (RJ)

08:50Amsterdam, New York (RJ)

12:25Vienna, London (RJ)

12:35Berlin, Frankfurt (RJ)

13:00Geneva, Madrid (RJ)

13:00Paris (RJ)

13:15Cairo (RJ)

13:40Brussels, Paris (RJ)

21:20Jeddah (RJ)

21:40Damascus (RJ)

22:00Abu Dhabi, Dubai (RJ)

02:00Jeddah (add) (RJ)

Other Flights

07:25Frankfurt (LH)

14:30Riyadh (SV)

14:30Aden (TY)

15:15Munich (LH)

16:00Istanbul (TK)

19:05Kiev (6U)

19:30Dubai (EK)

21:10Tel Aviv (LY)

22:40Cairo (MS)

00:40Beirut, Amsterdam (KL)

01:55Bucharest (RO)

04:00Rome (AZ)

Royal Wings (RW) Flights

08:00 Aqaba (from Marka Airport) (RW)

17:30 Tel Aviv (from Marka Airport) (RW)

21:30 Aqaba (from QAIA) (RW)

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Population increa
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planning — Emo

AMMAN (J.T.) — Minister of Administration, Basim Bughara, on Monday said that the Kingdom's population growth and the impact of the past decade, over the past decade, makes it incumbent on the government to direct its economic planning towards addressing the situation.

At a meeting organised by the National Population Commission (NPC) in conjunction with the Ministry of Administration, Bughara said the question of population and its impact on the country's development.

The ministry, he said, is developing public administration by modernising and upgrading procedures, training employees, and raising college graduates' quality for the labour force.

NPC Secretary General, Agha Salameh, who said that the commission is a permanent body, under the Queen Alia International Airport, outlined the NPC's growth since its inception in 1973.

The commission has asked out a plan for planning meetings with various ministries, voluntary groups and charitable organisations to orient them on and work their way in handling the economic and social dimensions of population issues.

He said, from the NPC's point of view, the impact of population growth on development has been reviewed in the present population situation in Jordan and the projected demographic changes over the next 30 years.

He said that the changes will be linked to sustainable development and will have direct effects on the health, education, employment and other sectors, he added.

The participants, who presented different numbers as well as the NPC, in an open discussion of economic and social

Tele

meet

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Jordan Press Association (JPA) Monday marked International Freedom Day by petitioning King Hussein to pardon all journalists currently being tried for alleged slanders the press law.

"Your Majesty, we pledge a whole new era for the press to reflect a much more responsible, constructive, and objective approach aimed at preserving the freedom of the press as a pillar of the nation's progress," the association said in a statement.

It added that it was closely following the government's plan to draft a new press law and said it was ready to take part in all preparations for the law.

The JPA urged the government to take a responsible opinion on all issues relating to regulating the press, "as we consider the press the most appropriate side to the advice and help."

It said that the world has been celebrating International Press Day since its declaration in 1945 and that Jordan is a firm supporter of free press as an integral part of the nation's freedom.

Therefore, the JPA calls for the respect of a man's dignity and for safeguarding his freedom of expression without limits or restrictions in international human rights conventions.

Meanwhile, the Cairo-based Federation of Arab Journalists issued a statement asking Arab Journalists Day on May 6, 1998. The Federation called on Arab governments to provide the public as well as

Press association a

By Alia Shukri Hamzeh
Special to the Jordan Times

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* The Last
Council, Iba
CAISO screen

French premier urges greater understanding on Pacific isle

NOUMEA (AFP) — French Prime Minister Lionel Jospin called Monday for an end to prejudice between different cultures as he opened a new centre here dedicated to New Caledonia's indigenous Kanak people.

The ceremony came a day before Mr. Jospin was to sign with the Kanak separatist movement and pro-French loyalists a historic accord which could eventually pave the way to independence for New Caledonia.

As he presided over the opening of the centre dedicated to slay Kanak leader Jean-Marie Tjibaou, the French leader acknowledged that "it was the feeling that the Kanak's cultural identity was being negated which was at the origin of his revolt."

He admitted there had been "impudence, provocation, injustices and dramas" during France's colonial rule of the Pacific territory.

"Misunderstanding" was "at the origin of the serious conflicts which to the past opposed the Kanaks to the other communities or the French administration," Mr.

Jospin said. Tjibaou "has taught us that all political conflict has a cultural dimension. Clearly, the Kanak culture can now open up towards others. The dialogue between cultures thus becomes a means of building peace."

Under the new agreement struck in April in Paris after two months of tough talks between the island's pro- and anti-independence factions, the divided South Pacific territory will from 1999 see a step-by-step devolution.

The 200,000 residents will vote by the end of the year whether the island should have its own government with enlarged powers. A referendum on independence from France, which annexed the territory in 1953, will be held within 15 to 20 years.

The talks to settle the future of the islands about 1,500 kilometres east of Australia stemmed from a 1988 agreement, known as the Matignon accord, that ended simmering unrest and violence by pledging a referendum this year on self-determination.

It is hoped the Paris

accord will end decades of tension between indigenous Melanesian Kanak people and the French and other settlers who, though in the minority, held economic and political sway.

However, the two sides remained fiercely opposed on whether the island should seek independence from France or not.

"I hope that in 20 years, the consultations will lead to New Caledonia remaining within the republic. That would be the best for all the communities living there together," said Jacques Lafleur, head of the loyalist Rally for Caledonia in the Republic (RPCR).

Taking into account cultures, the dignity of the Melanesians is necessary so that this country can live in peace."

For his part, the head of the separatist National Liberation Front (FLNKS), Roch Wamytan, said it was "obvious" the new accords would "lead to independence, and a quasi-state in association with France. Otherwise, FLNKS would not have signed them."

"The Caledonians must express themselves around the kernel, the Kanak people, colonised, who keep their right to political emancipation and independence. It's an outstretched hand, an invitation to create together the people of tomorrow."

Since 1975, when Kanak separatists launched a campaign for independence, France has faced more trouble in New Caledonia than in any of the other 10 possessions scattered across the Atlantic, Indian and Pacific Oceans, as well as in the Caribbean and in South America.

Representatives from 20 countries attended the inauguration of the Jean-Marie Tjibaou cultural centre, including the speaker of Australia's House of Representatives, Ian Sinclair, New Zealand's Maori Affairs Minister Tau Henare, Vanuatu Prime Minister Donald Kalpokas and Cook Islands Premier Sir Geoffrey Henry.

Tjibaou was a separatist Kanak leader who was assassinated on May 4, 1989, by an advocate of immediate independence who accused him of betraying the cause by signing the Matignon accords.



Gerard Finale (centre) who is accused of masterminding the murder of French Riviera parliamentarian Yann Piat assassinated four years ago, appears in the heavily-guarded court of Draguignan surrounded by Olivier Tomassone (left) and Stephane Chiarisoli two others suspected in the assassination (Reuters photo)

Tight security as seven go on trial for lawmaker's slaying

DRAGUIGNAN, France (AP) — Seven men went on trial Monday for the 1994 slaying of a woman lawmaker who crusaded against corruption along France's southern coast.

The trial, expected to last six weeks, got under way in this southern town amid unusually tight security, guarded by two companies of elite CRS national police plus a police commando team.

Motorcycle-bonded attackers shot Yann Piat three times Feb. 25, 1994, as her chauffeur drove her near her home in Mont des Oiseaux near the port city of Toulon. The two men on the Yamaha 750 were believed to be Lucien Ferri, 26, the

alleged gunman, and the driver Marco di Caro, 25. The two were arrested June 17, 1994, along with four other alleged accomplices, also in their twenties — Stephane Chiarisoli, 25, Olivier Tomassone, 23, Stephane Guechguich, 25, and Romain Gressler, 23.

Investigators the same day also arrested Gerard Finale, 53, the alleged mastermind of the hit and the owner of a restaurant in the nearby port of Hyeres.

Piat had campaigned against what she called "a culture of corruption" in the area. She also likely made enemies by switching from the far-right National Front to the conservative Republican Party.

In a letter she wrote Jan. 22, 1992, she said that "in case of a fatal accident" involving herself, it would be opportune to question Maurice Arreckx, former mayor of Toulon and president of the local General Council until 1994. Mr. Arreckx is among those expected on the witness stand.

The prosecution has yet to accept the theory of a political settling of scores. But the scenario gathered steam last year with the book "The Yann Piat Affair: Assassins at the Heart of Power." The authors alluded to two conservative former cabinet members but were fined in a defamation suit and the book was withdrawn.

'Mr. Super Corn' leaves Seoul with fertilisers and corn for North Korea

SEOUL (AFP) — A South Korean known as "Mr. Super Corn" left Monday on his way to North Korea to help the starving nation avert future food shortages.

A spokesman for the International Corn Foundation said Kim Soon-Kwon would leave for Pyongyang from Beijing Tuesday.

Mr. Kim won his nickname for his 17 years of work in impoverished African states on hardy corn hybrids that can withstand drought. He took with him six tonnes of corn seeds and 1,000 tonnes of fertiliser.

When he first visited North Korea in January the government asked him to relay a request to Seoul for 200,000 tonnes of fertiliser.

The request led to the first official government contacts in nearly four

years. But the Beijing talks broke down last month after Seoul said it would only provide the fertiliser at government level if Pyongyang agreed to set a timetable to discuss the issue of reuniting families separated since the 1950-53 Korean war.

North Korea's grain stocks ran out at the end of March and it is now fully dependent on foreign aid.

Catherine Bertini, executive director of the World Food Programme, said recently the Communist state's food situation had improved but it still faced "staggering" shortages requiring aid for years to come.

The secretary-general of South Korea's National Red Cross (KNRC), Lee Byung-Woong, is meanwhile

due to meet his North Korean counterpart Lee Kyong-Rin, a KNRC spokesman said.

The South Korean Red Cross chief took with him food aid including flour, fertiliser, powdered milk and baby food.

"We believe talks will be held between the two on issues such as humanitarian aid and the reunion of separated families," the spokesman said.

"It is premature to predict but the North has been showing flexibility now despite the breakdown of Beijing talks."

In February Red Cross officials from the two Koreas agreed that South Korea would provide 50,000 tonnes of food for the North.

2 soldiers killed, a third abducted in Abkhazia

TBILISI (AFP) — Two soldiers from the breakaway Georgian region of Abkhazia were killed and a third taken hostage after Georgian gunmen attacked the town near the ceasefire line, state radio reported Monday.

Abkhazian Deputy Defence Minister Garri Kupalaba told the radio the incident took place Sunday evening as the Abkhazian

soldiers were completing a tour of posts in the border region between the separatist province and Georgia.

He said two soldiers were shot dead by Georgian gunmen from the "White Legion" armed group, while the third was taken off along with the two dead bodies. Georgian officials have not commented on the attack.

Clashes are frequent in the

border region, despite a four-year ceasefire monitored by Russian peacekeepers.

The Abkhazia region on the Black Sea coast of northwest Georgia declared independence after the collapse of the Soviet Union and drove out Georgian troops in a war in which up to 10,000 people died and 250,000 people were displaced.

4 killed in China drive-by shooting

BEIJING (AFP) — Four people were killed and seven injured when gunmen sprayed bullets from a passing car into a restaurant in southern China, local police said Monday.

"So far, we do not have a motive, but we have arrested several people and we expect more arrests," a police spokesman in Leizhou city, Guangdong province said.

He refused to comment on the possibility of organised crime involvement.

The assailants fired from a white Toyota sedan at a dozen people eating mid-night snacks in a restaurant on the banks of the Nanbu Lake in Leizhou Thursday evening.

A waitress was killed instantly and three people died in hospital.

In addition to the arrests, police have so far seized two submachine guns, one handgun, and five clips containing 54 bullets.

U.N. team arrives for talks over southern Afghan pullout

KABUL (AFP) — A top team of United Nations humanitarian officials arrived in the Afghan capital Monday for talks with Taleban officials aimed at resolving their pullout from southern Afghanistan.

The team, led by New York-based deputy coordinator Martin Griffiths from the U.N. humanitarian assistance headquarters, is scheduled to discuss issues related to U.N. concerns over staff security in Taleban-held areas.

Mr. Griffiths, who is accompanied by U.N. officials from New York and Islamabad, is set to stay in the capital for up to four days of talks with Taleban officials.

However, delegates were tight-lipped on their entry into the capital, asserting they will reserve comment until after the current round of talks are over.

U.N. aid activities in the southern Taleban-militia base of Kandahar were suspended in March following a series of assaults on U.N. expatriate staff by senior Taleban officials.

According to the U.N., three separate staff members were assaulted with a table, a flask and the bare hands of a Taleban official.

The U.N. is also concerned about continued restrictions on women, including a rule forcing non-Afghan Muslim women working in aid to be accompanied by a male relative.

The Taleban, who are not recognised as Afghanistan's legitimate government by the U.N., accuse the organisation of taking an anti-Taleban stance.

In particular, the strict Muslim movement complaints that the U.N. left Kandahar in a storm of protest but remained silent over the massive looting of U.N. premises in the anti-Taleban alliance stronghold of Mazar-i-Sharif last year.

Flight cancelled after bee discovered in cabin

TOKYO (AP) — A Japan Airlines flight had to be cancelled Sunday after cabin attendants failed to oust an unwelcome guest — a huge bee that boarded ahead of passengers.

JAL's ground attendants saw the bee flying into the plane's cabin just before they finished preparing it for departure from New Chitose Airport in northern Japan to the central city of Nagoya, a JAL spokesman said Monday, speaking on condition of anonymity.

The bee eluded attendants trying to catch it, and nobody was stung, the spokesman said.

Cancelling a flight because of a bee was a first, he added.

Officials at the airport, on the island of Hokkaido 760 kilometres north of Tokyo, scrubbed the flight out of fear the bee might cause panic among passengers.

Students recall former Tiananmen leaders with apathy on centenary

BEIJING (AFP) — China's ruling elite marked the centenary of Beijing University Monday with praise for its revolutionary past but silence about the 1989 student massacre in Tiananmen Square, as current students remembered former pro-democracy campaigners with indifference.

The former democracy movement "has nothing to do with us. The students of '89 were like actors staging a comedy," said a 19-year-old student of urban planning from southwestern Sichuan province, who refused to be identified.

Wang Dan has completely wasted his time in prison. Today's students are more practical and rational. They think about money or about leaving the country.

Wang Dan, a former Beijing University student ranked number one on the government's most-wanted list following the crackdown, fled to exile in the United States last month after a total of six and a half years in prison.

Other students interviewed echoed the Sichuan teenager's comments. "I'm not here because of Wang Dan but because of the academic excellence of Beida (Beijing University). What is important to me is the academic credentials, not the political stance of the school," said a 19-year-old English major from Zhejiang province.

Others said a bigger concern than Tiananmen Square is how China's economy is restructuring, especially since this year the school is demanding tuition of 2,000 yuan (\$243) a year — a struggle for many once assured of a free education.

President Jiang Zemin led a sanitised publicity blast about the university's heroic past with a speech to 8,000 specially-chosen guests at the Great Hall of the People.

"Beijing University has a great history and revolutionary tradition and it should make further contributions to China's modernisation drive," Mr. Jiang said.

He was joined by Premier Zhu Rongji, head of the upper house Li Ruihan and the rest of the ruling Communist Party politburo.

Despite students' professed apathy to the Tiananmen Square massacre, educators at the event said the university had become noticeably more tolerant of dissent-

ing viewpoints on campus lately.

"People can speak their opinions more freely than a year ago, for sure. I'm very happy about this. It's a big improvement," said Shen Yilian, economic adviser to Beijing University.

"The level of debate and the kinds of things that are being published now are much more open than they were a few years ago," commented Gregory Kulacki, director of the Council on International Educational Exchange, which runs several exchange programmes in China.

While participants praised the increasing openness on campus, authorities appeared determined to keep the celebrations from taking on political overtones.

Former Tiananmen Square leader Wang Youcai, an alumnus invited to join the festivities, was arrested by police after he arrived in Beijing, apparently to prevent him launching protests, according to a human rights group. He had recently called for the government to rehabilitate former leaders of the movement whom authorities have branded criminals.

Academics said the university faces challenges such as stimulating creative discoveries in an academic environment that relies heavily on lectures and memorisation.

"China still uses very much lecture-oriented techniques. There is not a lot of discussion in classes. There hasn't been much change there," Mr. Kulacki said.

"The central government has said one of its priorities is promoting higher education to foster creative scientific discoveries."

Economic adviser Mr. Shen said that in line with efforts to move away from a state-planned economy, the government is encouraging the university to become less reliant on it for financial support.

"We may increase the number of foreign students to raise money in the future. The government still gives us a lot of money. But students who can afford it will have to pay for themselves more in the future," Mr. Shen said.

However, only about 10 per cent of students currently receive financial aid, he acknowledged.

The 2,500 yuan for tuition and board represents a solid three months' income for urban workers and far more for those from rural areas.



Former South Korean spy chief Kwon Young-Hae is escorted by police to a Seoul court (Reuters photo)

Indian defence minister under attack for statement on China

NEW DELHI (AFP) — Indian Defence Minister George Fernandes came under attack Monday for his explosive comment that China was India's number one enemy.

The Congress party, the main opposition in parliament, said the comments could jeopardise relations between India and China, which fought a brief but bitter war in 1962 and are now pursuing better relations.

Narwar Singh, a senior Congress leader and former foreign minister, described Mr. Fernandes' statements as "irresponsible and unfortunate."

"The art of diplomacy lies in increasing the number of our friends and reducing the number of our adversaries," Mr. Singh, a former ambassador, said.

"The defence minister is doing exactly the opposite," he told reporters a day after the private Home TV network released in advance the comments of Mr. Fernandes, a firebrand socialist in the new ruling coalition.

The defence minister said India faced a bigger threat from China than from Pakistan and New Delhi would make nuclear weapons if it ran out of options.

"China is potential threat number one," Mr. Fernandes said. The controversial interview will be broadcast later Monday by Home TV.

Mr. Fernandes said: "The potential threat from China is greater than that from Pakistan and any person who is concerned about India's security must agree with that fact."

He said China had stockpiled nuclear weapons in Tibet along India's borders and military airfields in Tibet had been extended in the last six months.

Mr. Fernandes also said China was training Myanmar's

army and had set up a "massive electronic surveillance establishment" on Myanmar's Coco Islands on the northern tip of India's Andaman and Nicobar islands.

Sino-Indian tensions eased following a series of high-level contacts which began after a visit by then-Congress Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi to Beijing in 1988.

Narwar Singh said Mr. Fernandes in his interview ignored the thaw in ties. "The defence minister appears to be ignoring that process. This, to say the least, is both irresponsible and unfortunate."

Mr. Singh said Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee's government must clarify whether the comments were the personal opinion of Mr. Fernandes or the official government stance.

"It is not clear whether Fernandes is propagating his personal agenda or reflecting the views of the Vajpayee government... a clarification from the government would not be out of place," Mr. Singh added.

Mr. Fernandes, speaking on India's policy on China, said: "I think there is a reluctance to face the reality that China's intentions need to be questioned."

"This is where our country has made mistakes in the past. We made those mistakes in the early 1960s. We paid the price in the 1960s. And I think things have not changed."

His comments came on the heels of the first-ever visit to India by a chief of the Chinese army, General Fu Quanyou.

India says China still holds 40,000 square kilometres of its territory at Aksai Chin in Kashmir. China lays claim to a swathe of Indian territory in the far eastern state of Arunachal Pradesh.

Intelligence chief claims all responsibility for smear campaign

SEOUL (AFP) — Former intelligence chief Kwon Young-Hae Monday claimed responsibility for an investigation into politicians but denied the aim was to block President Kim Dae-Jung winning elections.

"All the responsibility must be placed on me," Mr. Kwon, 61, said in an opening statement as he and six co-defendants appeared for trial at a Seoul district court.

"My men here had long risked their lives for intelligence operations and just followed my orders faithfully," he said, appealing for clemency for his men.

It was a dramatic turnaround from Mr. Kwon's earlier stance. He tried to commit suicide by slashing his stomach with a blade during interrogations in March, to avoid answering charges of masterminding the smear campaign.

Mr. Kwon admitted he had arranged pre-election news conferences imply-

ing links between Pyongyang and Kim Dae-Jung's camp. But he denied the news conferences were aimed at foiling Mr. Kim's presidential bid.

Mr. Kwon quit as head of the National Security Planning Agency (NSP) in February when Mr. Kim, a former dissident who once escaped an assassination attempt by intelligence officials, took office.

Along with Mr. Kwon, the first intelligence chief on trial for meddling in politics, five former NSP officials and Yoon Hong-Joon, a U.S.-based businessman, were in court on charges of libel and violating election and security laws.

Prosecutors accused Mr. Yoon of speaking for intelligence officials in return for \$25,000.

The former NSP chief is accused of masterminding a secret NSP plot, code-named "Operation North Wind," to portray Mr. Kim and his followers as leftist

sympathisers.

A storm erupted after Mr. Kwon's lawyers claimed the president's son, Kim Hong-II, and his followers had maintained secret connections with North Korea.

"We have intelligence information on connections between some (ruling party) politicians and North Korea," argued chief lawyer Oh Je-Do.

The lawyer, however, refused to elaborate on his claims, offering to disclose sensitive details if the court approved his demand for closed hearings.

He also argued that Mr. Kwon was innocent because he investigated possible links between Pyongyang and South Korean politicians as part of his "normal intelligence operations."

Prosecutors denounced the lawyers for seeking to twist the court's proceedings with groundless allegations.

Mr. Kwon is suspected

of leaking through his men a classified NSP report of secret contacts between South Korean politicians and North Korean officials in Beijing.

Prosecutors Monday issued summonses to two opposition lawmakers over suspicions they sought North Korea's help in last year's presidential polls.

The trial comes amid a sweeping government inquiry into policy failures and government malpractice under the rule of ex-President Kim Young-Sam.

The house-cleaning drive triggered a political storm, with opposition members accusing the ruling camp of undermining their power base before local assembly elections in June.

The June elections for mayors, governors and local assemblies have been seen as the first test of Kim Dae-Jung's leadership amid the lingering economic crisis.

Top U.N. envoy meets Sri Lankan officials on children in war

COLOMBO, Sri Lanka (AP) — A U.N. envoy met with Sri Lankan officials Monday as part of a campaign to keep children out of the country's 15-year-old ethnic war.

Olara Ominu arrived in this Indian Ocean island Sunday on a week-long visit during which he will travel to areas controlled by the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam, the main rebel group.

The Sri Lankan government accuses the LTTE of using children as fighters in its battle for an independent homeland for the minority Tamils.

The U.N. appointed Mr. Ominu as special representative for children in armed conflict after the General Assembly adopted a report by Graça Machel in 1996.

"Mr. Ominu's visit is a recognition of Sri Lanka's desire to implement the Machel Report, which would contribute towards addressing the issue comprehensively at both the national and international level," the Sri Lankan foreign ministry said in a statement Monday after Mr. Ominu met with Foreign Minister Lakshman Kadirgamar and other officials.

Mr. Ominu was not available for comment.

Mr. Ominu's duties include lobbying governments and private organisations to enforce the 1989 Convention on the Rights of the Child, which calls on states not to recruit children below age 15 into armed forces. He has also urged the creation of programmes to help integrate former child fighters into society.

The LTTE announced Sunday it would observe a unilateral cease-fire Wednesday and Thursday, apparently timed to coincide with Mr. Ominu's visit to the war-torn area.

But the envoy's visit was preceded by fresh flare-ups between government forces and Tamil rebels that left at least 23 people dead on both sides in attacks Sunday, police and military officials said.

Monday, Sri Lanka's defence ministry said it was unaware of any cease-fire proposal by the LTTE, but promised to take all measures to ensure that the U.N. representative could visit any area he wanted.

Mr. Ominu is scheduled to travel to the former rebel stronghold of Jaffna and to Vavuniya and Mannar, Jaffna and Vavuniya are under full government control, but the Tigers control parts of Mannar.

Prince Ranariddh returns for election deadline

PHNOM PENH (AFP) — Deposed co-Premier Prince Norodom Ranariddh returned to Cambodia from exile for the third time Monday before a deadline to register for July's election.

The prince is prepared to stay permanently, according to aides, who noted however that he would probably leave Cambodia at least once more before the July 26 polls.

About 200 supporters, some MPs and a few government officials turned up at the airport to welcome him along with the North Korean ambassador, the head of the U.N. mission and a U.S. diplomat.

His plane touched down minutes before a tropical downpour hit Phnom Penh, which supporters said was a good omen for his return and the election.

Political parties have until Thursday to submit their list of candidates to the National Election Commission. Voter registration is due to begin in two weeks.

Although the prince returned to meet the deadlines, it remained unclear whether his opposition alliance would take part in the election, as it has been highly critical of preparations.

"I'm here to check on progress for the elections," the prince said on arrival from Bangkok. "I have to go and register of course."

The prince has joined the international community in expressing grave concerns over political violence and intimidation and restricted opposition

access to the media.

Nearly 100 of Prince Ranariddh's supporters have been killed since his ousting, according to human rights workers.

An aide said the prince's movements within Cambodia would be "severely restricted" until international election observers, organised by the United Nations, were in place in every province and rural centre.

"We need the international observers — as many as possible — in the villages to protect the prince," the aide told AFP. "There are still not enough security arrangements being made."

Aside from the threatened boycott, there are other obstacles to Prince Ranariddh's participation in the polls.

Under the terms of a Japanese-sponsored peace plan under which the prince was granted a pardon for two criminal convictions, his resistance forces army must still be reintegrated into the government army.

Monday Hun Sen appointed five senior defence ministry officials to discuss the integration with a representative of the resistance army.

"The beginning of this discussion is the last step to be taken in order to realise completely the Japanese Peace Plan," the Hun Sen cabinet said in a statement.



Cambodia's deposed prime minister Prince Norodom Ranariddh is welcomed upon his arrival at Phnom Penh's Pochentong airport. Prince Ranariddh, who has returned to Cambodia twice since he was ousted as co-premier last July, told reporters that he was back to stay (Reuters photo)

Drugs that killed cancer in mice to be tested on humans within one year

BOSTON (AP) — A combination of drugs has been proven to kill cancer in mice. Now the question is: Will it work in humans?

The drugs — angiostatin and endostatin — work by cutting off the blood supply to cancerous tumours. Given intravenously to mice, the drugs have shrunk tumours and made them disappear altogether. The drugs also appear to prevent the spread of tumours.

Their innovator, Dr. Judah Folkman, a Harvard professor and researcher at Boston's Children's Hospital, called the combination of proteins "very promising," but cautioned that success might not carry over to human patients.

"We have to be careful with expectations," Dr. Folkman warned.

But the director of the nation's top cancer research centre called the initial

studies on mice "remarkable and wonderful" and said he hopes to begin testing the drugs on small numbers of humans within a year.

"I am putting nothing on higher priority than getting this into clinical trials," Dr. Richard D. Klausner, director of the National Cancer Institute, told The New York Times.

The development of the drugs — which are protein fragments found in human blood — caps a 30-year research process that began when Dr. Folkman reasoned that tumours cannot grow or spread without a steady blood supply.

A decade ago, Dr. Folkman and other researchers developed a first generation of cancer-inhibiting drugs that slowed the growth of tumours in animals.

In experiments during the

past five years, these early cancer inhibitors have been found to slow growth of tumours in human patients as well, Dr. Folkman said.

The new proteins take the cancer therapy one step further by eliminating the flow of blood to tumours, much like shutting off the water supply to a house. Furthermore, tumours do not become resistant to endostatin, as they can to chemotherapy drugs, Dr. Folkman said.

"If you look at tumours like a bunch of grapes on a vine, you could say current drugs and chemotherapy treat the grapes," Dr. Folkman said. "But these new drugs treat the vine so the grapes will wither and die."

Although it is impossible to speculate on which types of human cancer might respond to the new drugs, Dr. Folkman said the pro-

teins have eliminated forms of colon, prostate, breast and brain cancers in mice. So far, he said, researchers have not found a form of cancer in mice they cannot beat.

In one of Dr. Folkman's experiments, when protein treatments were stopped among some mice, their tumours returned. But after Dr. Folkman restarted the drugs — administering them continuously — the tumours receded and the animals remained healthy.

While Dr. Folkman warns against being overly optimistic, others are predicting complete success.

Nobel laureate Dr. James Watson, who directs a cancer research centre in New York, says Dr. Folkman's research may be as significant as Charles Darwin's.

Dr. Watson told the Times: "Judah is going to cure cancer in two years."

Jordan Times

An independent Arab political daily published in English by the Jordan Press Foundation.
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Towards a freer press

AS THE day for the introduction of a new press and publications law approaches, we add our voice to that of the press association in calling on the government to involve journalists, human rights activists and lawyers to produce legislation that would guarantee freedom of expression while protecting people from misinformation.

The past five years, during which the current press law has been in force, should guide us in our quest for a balanced and progressive law.

While we acknowledge that journalists and newspapers have many shortcomings, we remind the government that its information policy has in many ways been flawed. Journalists and the press feed and live on information, and information has been and will continue to be mainly the domain of government. For credible journalism to flourish there must be credible, and timely, information. If information is neither credible nor timely, then there will be much room for speculation and for incomplete and inaccurate news reports. The first order of the day then is for the government to provide prompt, full and accurate information.

Journalists' and newspapers, meanwhile, must commit themselves to the ethics of sound journalism. Editors should not publish inaccurate or unattributable stories.

Newspapers should provide training for reporters and editors and should pay them enough to ensure that they dedicate their time to their profession.

The journalists association should act as an ombudsman monitoring newspapers, spotting mistakes and bringing them to the attention of journalists. It should also act as an arbiter striving to disputes between the press and the public outside the courts.

Government and journalists' need to stop accusing each other of hindering freedom of expression. Neither can. The information revolution is upon us. No one anywhere can put obstacles in the path of free exchange of information. What people cannot read in our newspapers or see on our television screens, they can read and see elsewhere, on the Internet or on TV satellite stations.

One thing is sure. Only those providing full, accurate and credible information will be trusted and will have impact on the people.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

Al Arab Al Yawm's Riham Farra Monday said the sanctions on Iraq can be lifted in six months when the U.N. Security Council convenes to review the arms inspection situation in Iraq. The writer said that as for the U.S., it was clear in the last and the previous Security Council's sessions that Washington wants the perpetuation of the sanctions, but hope can be pinned on Russia, France and China. She said Russia and China did not only criticise Richard Butler and his inspection team's behaviour but also demanded that the nuclear file be closed permanently. France for its part has demanded that the sanctions regime be replaced with a monitoring programme to ensure that Iraq will not possess weapons of mass destruction, Farra said. The three permanent members at the U.N. Security Council, she added, can veto any U.S.-backed council resolution for maintaining the sanctions on Iraq in the coming session.

Al Dustour's Mohammad Daoud called on the government to exempt all industrial inputs from customs duty so that Jordanian manufactured products can compete with imported goods on the local markets and abroad. The writer said that exemptions of duty is certain to encourage investors to come to Jordan and will encourage local businesspersons to pursue efforts for improving the quality of their products. Once the production cost has been reduced the producers can sell their products at competitive prices abroad, a practice followed by many countries which back their national industries, according to the writer. Noting that some industrial businesses in Jordan have been forced out of the market because of high production costs and inability to compete abroad, Daoud said the problem can be solved by reducing to a minimum or altogether scrapping the customs duty fees especially on components used in the manufacture of goods for export. Should the government follow this advice, he added, it would contribute practically towards solving the chronic unemployment problem.

The View from Fourth Circle

Power and weakness define Israel's 50th anniversary

By Rami G. Khouri

ON THE basis of the Jewish calendar, Israelis last week celebrated the 50th anniversary of the founding of their state on May 15, 1948. The occasion has been one of deep introspection for most Israelis, who marked the moment with typical Israeli historical solemnity, contemporary pride, and domestic political and cultural contentions. After observing many of the Israeli celebrations on television and reading many Israeli press articles, my personal impression is that Israelis today have reason to be both satisfied and scared.

They can be satisfied and confident because of their many significant achievements in the fields of statehood, economy, technology and human will in the face of adversity. Yet, Israelis also should be concerned and perhaps even scared, because of three powerful dimensions of their national condition today that they have largely chosen to ignore during the celebrations: a) internationally, their position on peace-making with the Palestinians is increasingly isolated and untenable; b) regionally, they suffer steadily declining acceptance in the Arab Middle East after the remarkable detente with some Arab states in 1994-1995; and, c) in Palestine/Israel, tensions between Israelis and Palestinians are rising, and their conflict is slowly being redefined in explosive cultural, religious and colonial terms.

While Israelis celebrated their own strength, security, and vitality, this 50th anniversary commemoration also showed the loneliness of the Israeli state and people, their new forms of insecurities and vulnerabilities, and the obvious conditionality of the worldwide accolades and applause they received. The world, including its enemies and potential friends in the Middle East, are using the 50th anniversary to send Israel a clear message: there can be no lasting security or normalcy for Israel until Israelis themselves fairly resolve their conflict with the Palestinians and the other Arabs. It is fascinating, for example, to see the international mass media focus on the unresolved plight and unachieved national rights of the Palestinians as an integral element of the media's coverage of Israel's 50th anniversary. This is not propaganda. It is unfinished and living history.

The ongoing celebrations emphasise that Israel today is not in danger of disappearing or of being defeated in a conventional war. This has prompted many around the world — including some Israelis — to shift their focus from the historical vulnerability of Jews because of the evils and crimes Jews suffered around the world, to the different sorts of crimes that Jews and Israelis committed against Palestinians this century. Israel is seen today as more than a miraculous and morally untouchable national haven for Jews who suffered grievous historical traumas. Israel is judged as a normal state — presumably to the satisfaction of Israelis — but a normal state that must account for its own actions and its behaviour towards others.

The principal "other" in the modern Israeli narrative is

Israel is ideologically and diplomatically alone in the world, and its Jewish people are threatened with a brutal and cruel new form of self-inflicted exile brought about by their own wreckless use of power against others.

the Palestinian people. And Israeli actions towards the Palestinians are increasingly defined by a combination of past and present excesses. A now strong Israel is being called to account for its past colonial-style crimes of killing and driving out Palestinians, destroying hundreds of their villages, and building the Israeli state on the ashes of the Palestinian community; the same Israeli state has not a single supporter in the entire world for its contemporary ideological extremism and neo-colonial claim to maintain perpetual control of Palestinian and other Arab lands that were occupied in

the 1967 war.

Israel is ideologically and diplomatically alone in the world, and its Jewish people are threatened with a brutal and cruel new form of self-inflicted exile brought about by their own wreckless use of power against others. As Israelis celebrate their own historical survival, rebirth, and dynamism, most others in the world demand that Israel adhere to common global standards of state morality and behaviour — no occupation, no colonial subjugation, and no denying the right of others also to express their own national identity and reality.

For Palestinians, other Arabs, and the entire rest of humanity — without exception — the full measure of Israel is not the strength and nature of its power, but the quality of its actions and how it uses its power. If Israel wants true friends and not just fair-weather stock market admirers, if it wants warm neighbours and not just pacified and humiliated colonial subjects, it will have to come to terms with the full dimensions of its past and present behaviour to the Palestinians. It will have to do a better job of reconciling its national and security rights with the equal rights of its neighbours. It will have to make that final, difficult leap from the tribulations of history to the promise of normal human community in the Middle East.

Israelis should review their 50th anniversary celebrations in the wider regional and global context that will ultimately determine if they live a normal life in peace or if they remain perpetually strong but alone. Israel's current isolation and rising tensions in the region are precisely due to the fact that Israelis tend almost exclusively to address their own needs, without sufficiently considering the equal needs and rights of others in their world and their neighbourhood.

If you're in the business of being a light onto the nations, you have to live by the same rules that you want the other nations to live by — otherwise your light is a fiction, and, worse yet, a hypocrisy. That seems to me to be the message the world is sending to Israel this year, when the many achievements of the past half a century inevitably highlight the tasks still to be done, the wrongs still to be atoned for, and the rights still to be achieved.

'Witch-hunt' against Islamists

By Nicole Pope

ISTANBUL — Is Turkey drifting away from democracy and from the West? There is a growing sense among foreign observers in Turkey that the country is losing its way and gradually slipping into an isolated world of its own. As one diplomat put it, comparing Turkey to the more successful Eastern European applicants to the EU: "Turkey has been standing in one place for so long that it gives the impression of slipping back."

Take the dispute between the secular establishment and the Islamists. While most foreign diplomats agree on the need for Turkey to be vigilant and to keep an eye on the more radical Islamists, most believe

the perceived danger, trumpeted daily in alarmist reports in the press, to be wildly exaggerated. Despite the closure of the Welfare Party, despite attempted bans on the Islamic headscarf in universities, the Islamists have shown great restraint and there have, so far, been no violent incidents.

Observers now use terms like "witch-hunt" and "McCarthyism" to describe the current atmosphere, in which hundreds of civil servants, teachers, governors and mayors are being investigated for their alleged support for the "reactionaries." Clubs and associations are being raided and "militants" rounded up. Three elected mayors have already been suspended from their function by administrative order from the interior

ministry. Even the popular mayor of Istanbul, Recep Tayyip Erdogan, who is often talked of as a future leader of the Islamist movement and, thanks to his successful management of the old Ottoman capital, has won the respect of many inhabitants who do not share his political views, is now the target of enquiries that could lead to his dismissal. His colleague in Ankara, Melih Gökcek, is in a similar situation.

More puzzling perhaps than the attitude of the state institutions, whose tendency to try and impose their point of view from the top is not new, are the reactions of the educated elite, the people who are generally seen as pro-Western. On the whole, they appear to approve of the army's hands-on attitude to politics and the crackdown on political Islam. This goes not just for the rich business circles, who could perhaps benefit from the more stable economic environment that a strong government would provide, but also for intellectuals, leftists and unionists, people who were themselves often unjustly harassed, imprisoned or tortured in a not so distant past.

Words like "democracy" and "human rights" are still spoken daily by politicians, officials and officers alike, but their meaning here appears to fit less and less with their definition in the West. The military themselves are firmly convinced they are acting to protect democracy. At the last National Security Council, on March 27, the generals

apparently asked Prime Minister Mesut Yilmaz, who had caused a diplomatic incident with Germany by accusing the Bonn government of pursuing a policy of "Lebensraum" similar to that of Nazi Germany, to tone down his criticism of the Europeans. But the military don't seem to see that their daily interference in the political process in itself contravenes the Copenhagen criteria set by the EU, according to which armies have to be under the control of the civilian government, and is therefore an obstacle to integration.

In foreign policy too, Turkey is becoming increasingly shrill in its pronouncements. Despite being chastised by the army, Mesut Yilmaz had another go at Germany, describing Helmut Kohl as "my new enemy" and accusing Bonn of having slammed the European door in Turkey's face. As the EU began its talks with prospective candidates, including Cyprus, Ankara once again demonstrated its anger and bitterness at being left out of the Luxembourg process.

Foreign Minister Ismail Cem used strong language, warning the EU and the Greek Cypriots that their talks constituted "the first step towards escalation in the eastern Mediterranean, which can be dangerous." He also mentioned the risk of "another war in the island."

Later a foreign ministry official confirmed that Turkey and the self-declared Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus could "totally unite" to protect the Turkish presence on the island.

These threats and accusations, combined with the recent rounding up of Kurdish politicians and the harsh anti-Islamist measures ordered by the army, are not helping Turkey mend fences with its European partners.

The picture on the political scene does not give much hope for rapid improvement either. Faced with loud calls for early elections, the three partners in the coalition met on April 2 to devise their strategy and emerged after a few hours to announce that the government would not seek to go to the polls until 1999. This may well be wishful thinking.

Deniz Baykal, the leader of the Republican People's Party (CHP), which is currently king-maker in parliament, insists on elections this autumn. Other crises with the military may also be looming: the government has submitted several draft laws to parliament that will increase sentences or make it easier to prosecute "reactionaries."

But given the strong conservative element in the assembly, including in the ruling party ANAP, there may well be resistance and demands for amendments, in which case parliament could end up face-to-face with the military.

— Middle East International

Words like "democracy" and "human rights" are still spoken daily by politicians, officials and officers alike, but their meaning here appears to fit less and less with their definition in the West.

Anger at Europe

LETTERS

To the editor:

the latest format.

C.V. Prevatte
USA

To the editor:

LOVE THE new format!! Keep up the good work.

Stacie Christen
USA

To the editor:

LONG LIVE hard-working people.

G. Hishmeh
Washington, D.C.

To the editor:

JUST WANTED to tell you that I applaud your efforts as you continue to improve the Internet version of the Jordan Times. I read it nearly every day and am impressed with

Jake Bleed
Lincoln, Nebraska
USA

To the editor:

Great new look on your site! You are to be congratulated. It is now easier than ever to enjoy the Jordan Times. May you have even more success!

S. Cassidy
USA

To the editor:

Congratulations on the new look of the electronic Jordan Times — and thanks for continuing to make it available to those of us interested in a comprehensive look at daily events in the Middle East.

Mary E. Morris
Morris & Morris Middle East
Consultants

Insti
girl'By Hind-Lara Mango
in Amman, Jordan

AMMAN — In 1992 a comparative study of female education in the Middle East and North Africa was published. It was titled "Women's Education in the Middle East and North Africa: Trends and Prospects." The study was conducted by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the World Bank. It was a landmark study that provided a comprehensive overview of the status of women's education in the region. The study found that while there had been significant progress in the past few decades, there was still a long way to go. In particular, the study highlighted the need for more investment in girls' education, especially at the secondary and tertiary levels. It also pointed out the importance of improving the quality of education and of addressing the social and cultural barriers that often prevent girls from attending school.

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May Day, may is going

By Brian Brown

THE MAY Day observances have a long history, and judging by the way workers have celebrated around the world, people pretty much love it. Countries around the world were hit by violent demonstrations, strikes, and marches. Germany, Turkey, and Korea, even Switzerland, among others, were particularly affected. From the only country that didn't witness a strike of this sort was the U.S., which, on the day, observes Labour Day at the end of August. Besides, "May Day" is a name that has more with the distress of the "A-Team" call out before safety

hazard. The major confrontation in Germany took place in Leipzig, formerly part of East Germany, and pitted about 10,000 neo-Nazis against a force of thousands to "protect" the city during their march, against rampant violence. Dozens of leftists were injured, and the police for trying to arrest them, to disrupt the march. Later that day other wild leftists trashed parts of the city, and what has become a yearly event in the city, the "A-Team" call out before safety hazard. The major confrontation in Germany took place in Leipzig, formerly part of East Germany, and pitted about 10,000 neo-Nazis against a force of thousands to "protect" the city during their march, against rampant violence. Dozens of leftists were injured, and the police for trying to arrest them, to disrupt the march. Later that day other wild leftists trashed parts of the city, and what has become a yearly event in the city, the "A-Team" call out before safety hazard.

There is one problem: Nazism, and the associated with it, is still a real and serious threat. For example, in Germany, every one knows what is about, and they are certainly coming to the fore. In the U.S., people are marching and openly breaking this law, while the police are upholding the law are being threatened, and thus, are accessories to the crime.

It is well known in the German penal system, but it apparently includes references to the actions of such as assault, disorderly conduct, and vandalism — what most of the leftists being arrested were involved in. One group, whose track record includes such minor infractions as protesting their activities while others are being arrested and beat people equally. The leftists, right-wingers, trade unionists, and wearing moustaches, and wearing the hijab, they are all far from a line photograph from the action.

Institutions move to make up deficit in girl's, women's education worldwide

By Hind-Lara Mango
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — In 1993 a comparative analysis of basic education in the Middle East found that a major deficit in this area was girls' and women's education.

"Countries worldwide are realising that social and economic development can be achieved by improving girls' education in their own communities and countries," said Frank Dall, regional education advisor at UNICEF.

In Washington, D.C. on Wednesday a three-day international conference will convene to promote the theme of educating girls' as a development imperative.

The conference will seek to strengthen government, private-sector, and civil society partnerships and commitments to increase girls' school participation globally.

Five hundred high level government, civil society and religious representatives from the Middle East, Africa, the Americas, Asia, and the Caribbean are signed up to participate in discussions that will revolve around public and private partnerships in enhancing girls' education.

Following the 1993 basic education analysis of the Middle East, the United Nations Children's Fund "made reaching women and girls with basic education intervention a key part of our (UNICEF) regional strategy," Dr. Dall told the Jordan Times.

To date there are 14 girls' educational projects out of 17 of UNICEF's educationally active programmes throughout the Middle East.

Girls' education has been linked to improved health, nutrition, survival of children, increased productivity and better quality of life for families and communities.

Studies indicated that in addition to increasing opportunities for women and their participation in society, girls education leads to later marriages, lower fertility rates, and fewer maternal deaths.

Jordan has been commended for its efforts in implementing the goals set forth at Jom Tien in Thailand in 1990. Signatory countries including Jordan adopted the "Education for

All" declaration which aimed at giving every child a basic education by the year 2000. The declaration also made provisions for ensuring basic education strategies in combating adult female illiteracy.

The Kingdom has also accelerated and expanded its basic educational infrastructure at a much faster pace than many countries of the region. Boys and girls school enrollment are almost on par in Jordan, experts say.

The major challenge faced by the country is "women's illiteracy as it is very high in Jordan for rural women within the age range of 30 and above," said Dr. Dall adding that this was common to some other countries of the Middle East as well.

Dr. Dall said the Washington conference "will examine the roles of government, private-sector, religious, and non-governmental organisations in ensuring girls' school completion."

He said the venue itself provides an opportunity to learn from leaders in government, business, industry, religious organisations, and foundations who are promoting education improvement efforts.

Participants are to present new means of cost-effective and sustainable approaches for increasing girls' educational opportunities.

According to Dr. Dall, "A lot of us feel that this conference is important as it gives us a chance, two years before the year 2000, to review where we are on the issue of girls' education to help us achieve the overall goals (of Jom Tien), which at this point don't seem achievable given the current economic situation in the Middle East."

The conference is sponsored by the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), the Inter-American Development Bank, and UNICEF. Planning partners include the World Bank, the Delegation for the European Commission, and the Lewis T. Presion Education Programme for Girls.

Most of the donors at this conference have been promoting and encouraging girls' education as part of their development packages for the Middle East for the past fifteen years.

U.S. First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton will be the honorary chair of the conference and will give a keynote address on Thursday.



Literacy classes and health care lessons are considered an integral part of girls' education in developing countries (photo by UNICEF)

May Day, mayday: the ship is going down

By Brian Brown

THE MAY Day observances have come and gone, and judging by the way workers' day was celebrated around the world, people are pretty p***** off. Countries around the world were hit by violent demonstrations, riots, and marches. Germany, Turkey, South Korea, even Switzerland, among many others, were particularly affected. About the only country that didn't witness something of this sort was the U.S., which, in its wisdom, observes Labour Day at the end of August and besides, "May Day" is associated there more with the distress call airplane pilots on shows like "McGyver" and the "A-Team" call out before safely crash-landing.

The major confrontation in Germany took place in Leipzig, formerly part of East Germany, and pitted about 10,000 neo-Nazis, and a police force of thousands to "protect" them during their march, against rampaging leftists. Dozens of leftists were injured and arrested by the police for trying, unsuccessfully, to disrupt the march. Later that night, other wild leftists trashed parts of Berlin in what has become a yearly event.

Now, conditions in the former eastern part of the country aren't looking too well. Unemployment is high, the region isn't sharing in the prosperity that has fallen upon the western areas, and costs are rising. The neo-Nazis, in a replay of the past, are using these conditions to their advantage and are having a field day recruiting young, frustrated, and gullible people to fill their ranks.

But there is one problem: Nazism, and anything associated with it (siege, hell salutes and swastikas, for example), are illegal in Germany. Everyone knows what Nazi is about, and they are certainly criminals. Yet 10,000 people are marching around, openly breaking this law, while the forces entrusted with upholding the law are protecting them, and thus, are accessories to the crime.

I'm not well versed in the German penal code, but it apparently includes references to illegal actions such as assault, disorderly conduct, and vandalism — what most of the leftists being arrested were involved in when taken into custody. The question then is why one group, whose track record includes such minor infractions as genocide and starting major wars, receives protection for their activities while others are packed away by the dozen for their protests.

There were similar actions in Istanbul, once again featuring leftists versus the police and resulting in injuries and mass arrests. But the Turkish police, unlike their German counterparts, are to be commended: they arrest and beat people equally. Left-wingers, right-wingers, trade unionists, Islamists wearing moustaches and women wearing the hijab, they are all targets. A fine photograph from the action,

which showed a woman with blood streaming down her face, was accompanied by this caption: "Police beat an injured woman." Probably the kind of help you can do without. No wonder that when police stations are assaulted with machine-gun fire and grenades, the Turkish authorities have difficulty in determining the party or parties responsible.

But this May Day wasn't just marked by these ad hoc protests and demonstrations. Other areas of the world appear poised to enter new eras of conflict, a bright dawn of disorder and bloodshed. The economic troubles in Asia are pushing Indonesia to civil war. Industrialists fear that the South Korean labour movement may become "militant." A faction in Tibet announced that they may break from the Dalai Lama's non-violent campaign for independence from China and take up arms. Even countries that normally enjoy "security in an otherwise volatile region" are witnessing car bombings.

Why are people doing this? What is pushing normally cooperative, productive citizens to these irrational, destructive acts? Don't they know that their governments and their socialist, communist, capitalist or just gosh-dam feel-good ideology is working in their favor?

No, they don't know this, because if what they see are army and police troops coming at them to arbitrarily arrest and assault while the real criminals go free, they determine instead that no one is working for them. When the servants of those in power act in this manner, it is difficult to believe that the people at the top feel any other way.

Something similar happened in the U.S., something which partially led to the reputation the police there enjoy now. During the 1960s, peaceful civil rights demonstrators received police escorts in their marches. Now, in the 1990s, Klu Klux Klan demonstrators also receive protection during their demonstrations. The difference, though, is that in the 1960s, the escorts for the civil rights protestors included water cannons, dogs, and clubs, and strangely enough, they were all aimed at the escorts. A large number of this protective force were affiliated with the KKK, too. Now the days of the friendly cop getting cats out of trees, or Officer O'Malley helping granny across the street are over, and most Americans dislike, at least, or fear the police. The slightest (or not so slight) thing can set off a major, multi-day riot. So, if you hear someone crying out "Heil mich, polizei," "Aidez-moi, police," "Sa'adni, shurti," or "Help, help, police," don't necessarily take it as a call for assistance. It may be a warning.

Maybe May Day will make it to the U.S. after all.

The writer is on the editorial staff of the Jordan Times.

No need to rush in testing times

By Richard Tanner
Special to the Jordan Times

STUDENT ASSESSMENT is usually by end-of-year tests. All that's learned in all those hours of lessons and homework, not to mention revision, assessed in an hour's written paper. Absurd when you think about it for whoever writes furiously for an hour in life after school? Newspaper columnists, lawyers and amanuenses. And who ever dashes out memorised answers? Inter-Con, quiz contestants, lawyers and doctors plus of course politicians. If you're feeling unwell, a bit asthmatic, or suffering cramps from furious writing, you don't fail, unless you're a nursing mother, you're allowed time off. Indeed, most decisions are taken after discussion and deliberation, most reports redrafted several times and most actions considered at length. So why do we rely on speed-written tests?

Now, I'm not saying that people who can think very quickly and write nearly as fast (and illegibly, like the best doctors) shouldn't succeed. It's just that there are other forms of intelligence and application, some more effective even in academic life, yet we don't seem to value these as highly. Of course, some examinations do give credit for coursework and practical skills demonstrated in the classroom. In fact, some Art and English courses have been criticised for being 100 per cent coursework, the folio being the exam. Why not? Surely only pavement artists draw or poetic lovers write to order. Some of these innovations merely assess other skills than speed-writing: Orals in languages, experiments in science, mapwork in geography, etc., providing more legitimacy to the exams. Others even break the course into modules, each tested at the end of its limited time. A few

use continuous assessment, monitoring progress and gearing later study to the individual's development.

But shouldn't all learning aim to be like that? After all, the mother teaching her child to speak doesn't keep repeating "Mamma" once the child knows it, doesn't use a stopwatch to measure how fast her child walks, then graph the result for comparison with the neighbours' kids. No, she gets her child to apply that knowledge, to make a phrase then a sentence, to run and skip, to progress. Constant praise is given support and encouragement where needed, so the child is eager to learn. Such individualised learning, with the teacher as guide and the student knowing what is to be learned, why and sharing in the assessment, would surely be more profitable than didactic instruction where the learner is always subservient. But how can teachers be weaned off this medieval view?

First, the learner needs

can provide additional praise and support. Apart from being radical, the main danger lies in neglect of the immeasurable, qualities like honesty, courage, humility, generosity, initiative, leadership and creativity.

How different would assessment of this programmed learning be? For a start, most reporting would need to be open, the child knowing the tasks and how well s/he'd achieved them. These could be matched against standard criteria, e.g., by age 8, a child should be able to compose a sentence of at least 12 syllables, so learner, teacher and parent would know exactly where each child was, relative both to his/her previous performance (progress) and to his/her peers' standard. Given a stock of such standardised skills, the teacher would hold a "can-do" list for each pupil, set work appropriate for each and keep testing and praising individual progress. Though goals would be standardised, methods of teaching and learning would not: as

...there are other forms of intelligence and application, some more effective even in academic life, yet we don't seem to value these as highly.

to know what s/he's to learn and why, which means the teacher must break the learning into relevant steps which progress towards the ultimate end. Second, the learner must know how well s/he's doing, which step s/he's on and how s/he gets to the next one. This requires both student and teacher to monitor progress together, to praise every success and to go on to the next ladder. Assessment is by tests appropriate to what's being learned, easily reported to parents who

teachers teach differently, so learners learn differently, with the master-teacher guiding each student in the best way for him/her to learn. And to avoid only putting children through hoops, teaching the measurable, the teacher would need to provide learning opportunities for those subjective areas, honesty, courage and so on, then note illustrative examples of behaviour that reflects these.

So how will this interactive style of teaching and learning be reported? The standards of basic

skills and knowledge will be reported objectively, rather like a driving test. Subjective areas should be discussed with the child, using examples: You took A's pencil and didn't return it so you're "not very honest," you protected your little brother against school bullies so you're "strong on courage." Students should record their achievements: Played football for school U-11 team or achieved Grade 5 oboc or climbed Jebel Run.

Finally, teachers can make a general comment and children make a response, both pointing to what needs to be done next and how that's to be achieved. Such a personal profile can be supported with evidence, best story, final math test etc., and become a Record of Achievement (ROA), carried from class to class as the students progress through the school. To gain credibility, the Leavers' ROA should be agreed with end-users, college or university and employer. Already, most universities and major employers request more information than that produced in the frenetic series of tests, of which Tawjihi is a glaring example, supplemented by highly subjective references. They spend time and money producing complex forms, setting essays, holding interviews and giving personality tests, all of which have to be checked, often by poorly qualified personnel, where on agreed ROA would tell them much more and might help fit round people into round holes rather than square ones.

Here in Jordan, where everyone's neurotic about tests leading to Tawjihi, the benefits of alternative testing should be obvious. Students and teachers would be motivated to learn and by learning, rather than by on-off memory-cum-speed-written test results. Universities, instead of

grading courses by Tawjihi percentage, compounding the absurdity, 96+ for medicine, 92+ for law, 88+ for engineers and 72+ for farmers, could allow real choice so students could take programmes they wanted or needed or which particularly interested them. Motivation and initiative would increase, time wasted on irrelevances decrease and graduates become learners rather than hurdlers. Focus on the necessities would allow time for personal development and those immeasurable mentioned earlier, making university a liberating experience as well as a good preparation for working and family life thereafter.

Now I'm not arguing for a free-for-all. The basics have to be learned for without these no-one will make much of a contribution to developing Jordan. What I am saying is that most teaching is irrelevant and inefficient and that most learning is boring and ineffective. It's irrelevant because many learners are past that stage or feel they don't need it; it's inefficient because it uses inappropriate methods, the "persistence of the recitation," for example, and both make learning dull and slow, frustrating both teachers and learners. Education needs a renaissance, where educationalists work together with government, business and the professional associations to agree on essentials (and focus on them), and desirables (and make time for some of these), then appropriate ways to teach/learn and assess these before reporting to parents and end-users. Given the size of Jordan's learner population, the limited resources available to educate it and the need for continued rapid progress up world education table, the case for radical improvement is overwhelming.

Prime minister describes education as Jordan's most important industry

IRBID (Petra) — Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali on Monday said security and stability are vital factors for creating the right investment climate to attract industrial investments to Jordan.

Addressing the opening session of a seminar on investments in northern Jordan organised by Irbid Private University, Dr. Majali said the government has begun phasing out its former economic functions and has turned over a great deal of such activity to the private sector. The government has also started privatising most public companies, he added.

The government is raising the slogan of partnership and participation and adopting the principle of openness, not only in the economic sector, but also in various political, social and scientific fields, said the prime minister.

The principle of freedom and participation is in line with His Majesty King Hussein's motto that the human person is the most precious asset in Jordan, said Dr. Majali.

Stressing the importance of education, he described it as the most important Jordanian industry because it is the basis for society's development. Jordan's most precious exports to Arab countries are skilled and trained Jordanian personnel, he stated.

The government has

given due attention to investment and is going ahead with a decentralisation programme to give governors more authority in handling local affairs.

Irbid Private University President Ahmad Rabaia said the seminar was designed to orient local and foreign investors on the possibilities of investment in the northern region of Jordan.

The two-day seminar will discuss working papers on industries in northern Jordan, effects of the country's financial policies on investment and the role of the industrial development bank on industry, among other topics.

Later, Dr. Majali paid an inspection tour to Al Hassan Industrial Estate near Irbid and met with officials and members of the investors' society, who briefed him on the volume of investments by local, Arab and foreign countries in the estate.

The director general of the Jordan Industrial Estates Corporation (JIEC), Amer Majali, briefed the prime minister on the advantages of investing in the Qualifying Industrial Zone (QIZ), noting that goods manufactured there enjoy free access to U.S. markets.

The JIEC has received many applications from factories and companies around the world, including the U.S. and eastern Asia, to start

factories in the QIZ, he added.

In reviewing the work at the zone, Mr. Majali pointed out that the corporation has recently appropriated 202 dunums to be annexed to the industrial city, which will be expanded to 629 dunums in area.

A total of 2,500 workers are now employed in the estate's factories, but the figure is expected to rise to 8,000 after new businesses start operations in the annex.

But he noted that the estate faces the problem of water shortages, stating that the new annex, which will be completed by the end of this year, will require up to 600 cubic metres a day.

Dr. Majali toured the industrial estate, which houses 55 businesses with a combined capital estimated at JD80 million.

Also Monday, the prime minister visited the Jaber border post, near Ramtha, where he opened a duty free shop and inspected its different sections. Duty free shops will be opened at several border posts, according to officials from the Jordanian Duty Free Shops Company, a public shareholding company in which the government owns 60 per cent equity.

Dr. Majali also inspected the facilities for travellers at the border post.

Seminar begins examining privatisation, restructuring industrial sector in Arab World

By Ghaila Alul and Fairouz Abu Ghazaleh
Jordan Times Staff Reporters

AMMAN — An increasingly competitive global market has left Arab countries with no choice but to speed up a difficult — yet arguably unavoidable — privatisation process.

This issue was tackled Monday by several Arab experts at the beginning here of a three-day seminar on privatisation and the restructuring of industrial sectors in Arab countries.

"Our Arab economies remain very small and face great competition in light of international agreements such as the World Trade Organisation (WTO) and the European partnership," Amman Chamber of Industry (ACI) Chairman Khalid Abu-Hassan, said in his opening speech.

He said the gross domestic product (GDP) of Arab states constitutes almost half of that of Italy, whose population is quarter that of the Arab World combined.

"Arab exports, including oil, are less than Holland's whose population is estimated at 15 million," Mr. Abu Hassan told the seminar, organised by the Arab Industrial Development Organisation (AIDMO) in cooperation with ACI.

To encourage Arab exports, he added, "we should improve our centres as well as support marketing institutions — a move essential for the creation of an investment climate suitable for privatisation."

He called on Arab countries to encourage the pri-

ivate sector to establish export-oriented industries and adopt new policies aimed at integration and increased cooperation.

Mohammad Alej, an expert from AIDMO, said most Arab states have come a long way in privatising some of their state-owned enterprises, yet they still lag behind in implementing practical measures in this field.

"The number of privatised entities in the Arab World since the late 80's remain minimal, even in the countries that outperformed others in privatisation — such as Tunisia, Morocco and Egypt," Dr. Alej said.

The number of privatised establishments barely reach a percentage of 10-45 out of the total number of projects owned by the public sector.

Morocco, for example, has privatised 49 institutions out of a total of 114 state-owned companies with the rest being prepared for privatisation before the end of this year, said Dr. Alej.

He indicated that Egypt, on the other hand, has sold the shares of 50 companies to the public between 1994-1998. To implement its privatisation programme, the Egyptian government has also sold most of its shares in 16 countries, as well as between 10 and 40 per cent of its shares in an additional nine companies.

Since 1995, Tunisia privatised 12 institutions in the transport and convertible industries, said Dr. Alej.

Tunisia, he added, hopes to generate \$2 billion in foreign investments between 1997-2000 through the pri-

vatization of six cement factories and three hotels. It also plans to sell 50 per cent of the equity in 63 firms for a total of \$1.4 billion.

The privatisation process in Jordan, which picked up momentum two years ago, is aimed at increasing the role of the private sector and reducing the government's direct participation in the productive sectors in a bid to complement state efforts towards combating poverty and unemployment.

Jordan plans to sell 40 per cent of state equity in the Jordan Telecommunications Corporation (JTC) to a strategic investor. The partial sale of JTC — transformed into a company in 1996 — will make Jordan the first Arab state to allow private foreign ownership of its fixed network, while retaining a JTC monopoly on the operation of fixed lines till the year 2002.

The Kingdom also plans to sell 40 to 60 per cent of state equity in the debt-ridden Royal Jordanian to a strategic partner as part of plans to restructure and privatise the national carrier.

Abdul Rahman Suheibani, Arab League assistant secretary general for economic affairs, stressed that Arab countries should learn from the Asian economic crisis when implementing their privatisation programmes.

"Arab states should take what happened to Asian countries as a lesson to be more cautious in reviewing their future economic policies and the performance of their financial markets," he said.

Sharansky promises to examine Jordanian complaints on trade

AMMAN (Petra) — Industry, Trade and Sup-

ply Minister Hani Mulki Monday discussed the need for widening the list of goods exchanged between the two countries.

Dr. Mulki said during a meeting with his Israeli counterpart, Nathan Sharansky, that the Israeli side reacted positively and showed readiness towards implementing the Jordanian proposal.

Dr. Mulki requested Mr. Sharansky to lift the barriers facing the exportation of Jordanian cement to the Palestinian areas.

Among such hindrances is the insurance issue imposed by the Israelis on transport vehicles.

"The Israeli side has promised to tackle this problem seriously and to come out with a suitable solution," said Dr. Mulki.

He also discussed with the Israeli minister obstacles, particularly taxes, hindering the exportation of Jordanian construction steel to the Palestinian territories.

Dr. Mulki, pointing that Jordan has surplus of this material which the Pales-

tinian market direly needs.

Regarding the industrial estates, Dr. Mulki said that he agreed with Mr. Sharansky on finalising technical measures and parameters for companies which can make use of the so-called qualified industrial estates.

"Jordan is currently studying the expansion of Al Hassan Industrial Estate in Irbid," noting that the Israeli minister welcomed the Jordanian intention.

Dr. Mulki said that eco-

nomie relations between Jordan, Israeli and the PNA were also discussed and that consultations for holding a trilateral meeting are underway.

Dr. Mulki stressed the need for increasing the exchange of goods and enhancing economic development among the three countries.

The minister added that Israeli electronic and telecommunications companies showed interest in launching investments in the kingdom.

HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR TUESDAY, MAY 5, 1998

By Linda C. Black, Tribune Media Services

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) It's been said that the highest form of enlightenment is to serve one who serves. That's exactly what you get to do today. The more consciously you do it, the less time you'll have to spend on it. Or at least, the less time you'll have to spend on it. Or at least, the less time you'll have to spend on it. Definitely make that your intention.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) Your sweetheart is under pressure right now. Do what you can to help. You can get privileged information from friends in high places. It can help your loved one plot a wise course of action. Don't spend too much money on it, though, especially if the money belongs to you both.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) This would be a good evening to have people over for dinner. They might show up whether you invite them or not. You could even invite the boss to come along — and be surprised at how pleased he or she is to be included. Don't worry. You won't be sorry. This person could turn out to be the life of the party.

CANCER: (June 22 to July 21) You're learning an amazing rate. Once you get information filed into your data banks, it's easy to retrieve. Too. Put these talents to good use while you have them. Learn something that will benefit you later. If you study something you're passionate about, it could lead to the job of your dreams.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) There could be a great deal of money coming into your pocket. This is partially from work you've done and partially from recent negotiations. Perhaps you decided to sell something you haven't been using. Your opportunity for profit is very close at hand. Act now or you might miss it.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) Today could be frustrating, but don't let it get to you. You're stronger now than before, and as you gain new power, you're naturally running up against new restrictions. They've been there all along. You just didn't know, because you were hiding out. Don't worry about it. It's obvious that you're headed in the right direction.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) Some bureaucracy wants you to do something a certain way. There are rules to be followed, forms to be filled out and probably fees to be paid. Don't panic. You're going to have to jump over a few hurdles before you get from here to there, but it's all going to work out fine.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) You're not very big on meetings. To you, anything beyond two or three words is fluff. That'll be your impression today, as folks from each different point of view explain their positions. They're all part of the group you're working with, so you may as well listen and take notes. What you learn today, you'll use later.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) Changes in your home and career are rather unsettling. Things that were one way are now another. What was up is suddenly down. What was in is now out. In fact, if you start thinking of things backwards, it will be easier to succeed. Something that didn't work before might just work now.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) You're learning new information quickly, and putting it to work in ways you've never done before. It's a healthy stretch for you. It's also a little nerve-wracking, since you're breaking new ground, but that's OK. The information you've been gathering will be appropriate for what you're up to next. So go for it!

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) You're finding new ways to spend money, but you're also finding new ways to earn it, and maybe new ways to borrow it. Be careful. It's easier to take it out of the account than to put it back in. Speaking of putting money back in, make it a rule to do that every week, starting right now. Into your savings account, of course.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) Go over your plans carefully until you have every little detail right. Now that you know what the other person wants, the next assignment is to actually produce it. Here's where the attention to detail comes in handy. It could make the difference between an average job and a really spectacular one.

Birthing time of May: Emerald — Citrine

Daily

A review of new

Committee to consider a between government and

A COMMITTEE from the Ministry of Energy and Mineral Resources, the Ministry of Industry and the Petroleum Refinery Company (JPRC) has been formed to formulate a draft agreement to amend the concession agreement with the government. JPRC Chairman Abdul Maged Shoman told a general assembly. The amendment, said, will enable the company to open a pure commercial bank in the concession area and the current period in high economic and investment groups to be owned by the Kingdom at present.

Mr. Shoman indicated that the JPRC has engaged the U.S. company M.W. Kellogg to conduct an intensive study to speed up the size of the expansion needed to meet the obligations required under the concession agreement. The second stipulates the refinery suffice the Kingdom's need of petroleum derivatives until 2008, the end of the concession period.

As to the dispute between the company and the government over the profit level, Mr. Shoman said a solution was reached between the two parties. Instead of demanding the payment of JD5.2 million covering the period from 1994 to 1998, both sides agreed that the JPRC should only settle JD1.8 million for the period 1994-1995, the government and company specified the "net profit" of JD1 million and, consequently, the financial dispute between the two sides was completely settled, according to Mr. Shoman.

The general assembly, for its part, approved distributing JDS new shares in 28 dividends at a rate of 16 per cent of

REUTERS

The Business o

Major Currencies & Cross Rates				
Currency	USD	DEM	GBP	CHF
US Dollar	1.0000	1.7802	0.6901	0.6633
DE Mark	0.5617	1.0000	0.5368	0.5368
GB Sterling	1.6663	2.9689	1.0000	0.7936
CH Franc	0.8714	118.52	0.4927	1.0000
JP Yen	0.0075	133.63	0.4562	1.1111
CA Dollar	0.6971	1.2915	0.4225	0.5048
IT Lira	0.0006	0.1025	0.3412	2.3636
NL Guilder	0.4983	66.73	0.2386	1.4215
FR Franc	0.1676	0.2980	0.1004	0.3422

Middle Eastern				
Currency	USD	JOD	SAR	BAH
US Dollar	1.0000	0.7090	2.7501	0.3771
Jordan Dinar	1.4104	1.0000	5.2396	0.5313
Saudi Riyal	0.2666	0.1831	1.0000	0.5400
Bahrain Dinar	2.65	1.8806	3.9477	1.0000
Qatar Dinar	0.2747	0.1948	1.0000	0.5300
Kuwait Dinar	3.2744	2.3215	12.2800	1.2343
Emirates Dinar	0.2723	0.1930	0.3412	0.5312
UAE Dirham	0.66	0.4680	2.4754	0.2448
Egyptian	0.2327	0.2075	1.0977	0.1113

Energy				
Oil	Last	Review	Currency	
Brent	14.67	13.88	SA Riyal	0.3771
WTI	16.00	15.91	AE Dirham	0.5313
Bonny	14.67	13.88	KW Dinar	1.2343
Dubai	12.50	12.48	BH Dinar	1.0000
U.S. Gas	158.00	158.00	CY Pound	0.5313

JOD Cross Rates				
Currency	Buy	Sell		
US Dollar	0.708	0.710		
GB Sterling	1.1775	1.1834		
DE Mark	0.396	0.398		
CH Franc	0.4733	0.4757		
JP Yen	0.1181	0.1187		
CA Dollar	0.5305	0.5332		
IT Lira	0.3516	0.3534		
FR Franc	0.4014	0.4034		

Main Equity Ind				
Bourse	Index	Value		
New York	DOW JONES	5280.2		
New York	S&P 500	1128.82		
London	FTSE 100	3048.3		
Tokyo	NIKKEI 225	15891.1		
Paris	CAC 40	3974.25		
Frankfurt	DAX	5314.86		

THE Daily Crossword Edited by Wayne Robert Williams

ACROSS

- Sign of healing
- Small, poisonous vipers
- Baseball player Sal
- Tortoise's rival
- Ox of the Celebes
- French actor
- Fitzgerald of soul
- Small brook
- Beyond stringy
- Alaskan language
- Lighted torches
- Most speedy
- Extinct birds
- Center of a country
- Be in the red
- Steer flesh
- Space in time
- Scale watcher
- Kashmir river
- Comic Caesar
- Nile pon
- Worked hard
- Knight's title
- Functions
- Booming jet
- Grand
- Chromosome unit
- Marine facilities
- Bride's wardrobe
- Twangy
- Transit payment
- Money of Iran
- dit
- Tolerate
- Icelandic sage
- Marsh grass
- Alma
- Property record
- Brings to a conclusion

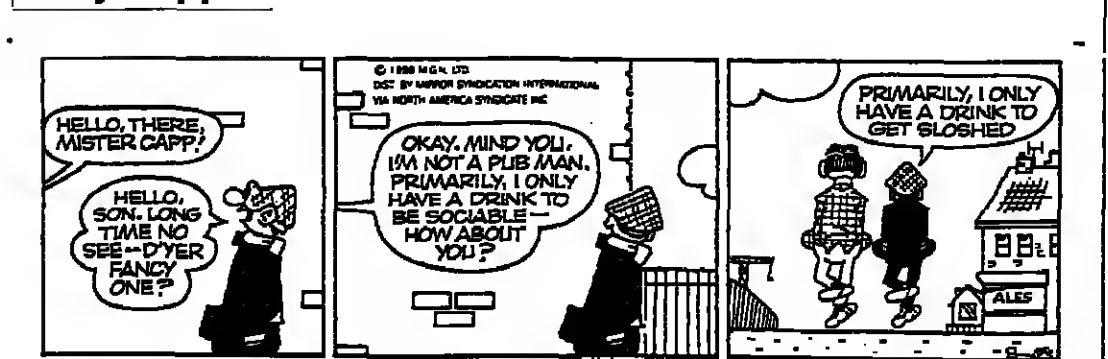
DOWN

- Bundle of items
- Showy lily
- City in Provence
- America the
- Swiss river
- Brandy glasses
- Survey
- Dall last
- Savage
- Rule
- County in California wine country
- God of France
- Bandied
- chalestony
- Sundial X
- State of mind
- Anne de Beaulieu
- Miss
- "Those" the
- Aphrodite's child
- Little pieces
- Adam's grandson
- Splice film
- Wisconsin city
- Period of time at school
- Talk out of
- Blocker and Duryea
- Hwy. sign abbr.
- McShane or McKellen
- Show the way
- Quaking tree
- Stationed
- Snow-day transportation
- Mire car
- Singer
- McEntire
- Overlook
- Assistant
- Youth

Peanuts



Andy Capp



Mutt'n'Jeff



THE BETTER HALF



JUMBLE

Unscramble these four Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

IMECH

ELVOG

INGARD

NOOTIL

Answer: A

Yesterday's Jumbles: MAXIM FORTY ORIGIN FROUC

Answer: Where employees who bought company shoes ended up — ON "FIRM" FOOTING

JORDAN M

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Daily Beat

A review of news from the Arabic Press

Committee to consider amending concession agreement between government and Jordan Petroleum Refinery

**** A COMMITTEE** from the Ministry of Energy and Mineral Resources, the Ministry of Industry and the Jordan Petroleum Refinery Company (JPRC) has been formed to formulate a draft accord that would amend the concession agreement with the government, JPRC Board Chairman Abdul Majeed Shoman told the general assembly. The amendment, he said, will enable the company to operate on pure commercial basis "as the concession does no longer meet today's requirements and the current period in light of economic and investment givings followed by the Kingdom at present."

Mr. Shoman indicated that the JPRC has engaged the U.S. company M.W. Kellogg to conduct an intensive study to specify the size of the expansion needed to meet the obligations required under the concession agreement. The accord stipulates that the refinery suffice the Kingdom's needs of petroleum derivatives until 2008, the end of the concession period.

As to the dispute between the company and the government over the profit level, Mr. Shoman said a solution was reached between the two parties. "Instead of demanding the payment of JD20.2 million covering the period from 1981 until 1990, both sides agreed that the JPRC should only settle JD1.8 million," he said.

As for 1991-1995, the government and the company specified the "excess profit" at JD3 million and, consequently the financial dispute between the two sides was completely settled, according to Mr. Shoman.

The general assembly, for its part, approved distributing JD5.69 million in cash dividends at a rate of 16 per cent or

JD0.800 per share, which carries a JD5 par value. According to the annual report, the company's net profit last year amounted to JD8.36 million, 9.6 per cent less than the JD9.24 million net profit recorded in 1996. Gross profit was, however slightly higher in 1997 as it amounted to JD32.52 million compared to JD32.24 million in 1996.

The report showed that the indebtedness of the government institutions has risen from JD209.18 million in 1996 to JD228.93 million at the end of last year, the lion's share of this indebtedness was that of Royal Jordanian which was saddled with a JD157.79 million of debt (JD134.28 million in 1996).

The company's total sales amounted to 4.12 million tonnes, 77,600 tonnes or 1.9 per cent more than the 1996 figure. In terms of money, the sales amounted to JD516.2 million compared to JD493.4 million in 1996. Production on petroleum derivatives totalled 3.26 million tonnes, 3.3 per cent or 103,000 tonnes higher than the 1996 total. The refinery was supplied with a total of 3.4 million tonnes of crude oil, 5.1 per cent more than in 1996. Of the total, 3.44 million tonnes come from Iraq and 1,797 tonnes from Jordanian oil wells.

The company's total assets at the end of last year stood at JD401.67 million compared to JD380.30 million at the end of 1996.

Mr. Shoman concluded by promising the general assembly to contact the government over distributing a free bonus share to shareholders (Al Ra'i + Al Dustour).

Khreisha inaugurates JD4 million plant for producing animal feed concentrates

By Mohammad Ben Hussein
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Agriculture Minister Mijhem Khreisha Monday inaugurated a JD4 million factory that will produce 30,000 tonnes of animal feed concentrate a year.

The Netherlands-based Provimi Holding Company holds a 35 per cent equity in the plant whose output will be sold locally and in other Arab countries, including Sudan, Yemen, Iraq and Syria.

"The factory will provide the country and the international market with its needs of fodder for chicken, fish, live stock and sheep," said one official close to the project.

"The annual production could be doubled to reach 60,000 tonnes if working hours are increased to 16 a day from eight," he added.

"The factory can reach a

maximum production output of 120,000 tonnes if new production lines are added."

Provimi Holdings branch in Jordan and France's Aridani Bejin Se hold 70 per cent of the company's shares — 35 per cent each. Lebanese investors Nabil and Joseph Zeid Ganim hold the rest of equity.

"Aridani Bejin Se will provide the factory with experts and modern technology as well as opening up international markets for its products, especially in Syria, Iraq, Sudan and Yemen," the official said.

Provimi Holding Jordan is a branch of the international Provimi Holding Company which has worldwide companies producing animal

feed, sugar, starch and vegetable oil.

"The creation of this factory through a Jordanian-European partnership runs in harmony with our aspirations to open up to the world and to encourage investments," Mr. Khreisha said in an inaugural speech.

"It also reflects the spirit of the Jordanian-European association agreement through reaffirming the confidence of the European investor in Jordan," he added.

Jordan and the European Union signed an association agreement in November to create a free trade area by the year 2010 and to encourage European investments in the Kingdom.

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GALLERIA

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النجم العالي بالأتشينو

DONNIE BRASCO



"She's So Lovely"

TITANIC

ويستمر عرض فيلم

China gives tacit approval to wholly foreign-owned operations

SHANGHAI (AFP) — China overcame objections last year and has been tacitly relaxing approval conditions for foreign companies to set up wholly-owned subsidiaries on the Chinese mainland, an investment official has said.

Xia Zhongguang, deputy director of the project promotion division of Shanghai's Foreign Investment Commission, told AFP that the government had always allowed

full foreign ownership in industries which were not crucial to economic development.

"For example, car manufacturing projects had to be joint ventures but automotive component ventures could be wholly foreign-owned. We have always had this view but last year everybody accepted it," he said.

Last year was also the first time that the number of wholly foreign-owned enterprises exceeded approvals given to joint ventures.

Chinese statistics showed that 45.6 per cent out of 21,046 foreign invested projects approved last year were enterprises owned 100 per cent by foreign companies.

Mr. Xia said last month when asked to comment on the trend that the government had no preference regarding the proportion of equity ownership but approval for firms operating here and owned entirely by foreign concerns still depended on the level of investment capital, advanced technology input or export orientation.

Clarifying his statement, Mr. Xia said: "It is easier to obtain approval for wholly foreign-owned projects than before but still harder than to obtain approval for joint ventures."

He said joint ventures were still the better way of doing business in China because "when a foreign investor is starting up in China, it is better to have a Chinese partner who knows the local conditions to help him."

Foreign investors, especially those involved in 50:50 ventures with Chinese partners, have found joint venture partnerships trying.

Mr. Xia said the situation was different in Shanghai where firms owned entirely by foreigners accounted for only 26.3 per cent of all ventures approved, compared to 51.5 per cent for joint ventures.

Analysts said the relaxation on equity ownership would make the investment environment more attractive for investors whose interest had cooled somewhat since China imposed import duties on capital goods.

REUTERS The Business of Information

Major Currencies & Cross Rates									
Currency	USD	DEM	GBP	CHF	JPY	CAD	ITL	NLG	FRF
US Dollar	1.7802	0.6001	1.4894	133.16	1.4346	1768.28	2.0068	5.3672	
DE Mark	0.5617	-	0.3369	0.8361	74.76	0.8056	885.88	1.1267	3.3486
GB Sterling	1.6693	2.9889	-	2.4800	221.83	2.3905	2928.01	3.3421	9.9372
CH Franc	0.6714	119.52	0.4027	-	88.38	0.9625	1178.88	134.67	4.0043
JP Yen	0.0075	1.3383	0.4602	1.1179	-	1.0789	13.18	150.58	4.4832
CA Dollar	0.6971	1.2916	0.4225	1.0566	1.08	-	1270.80	1.4561	4.3265
IT Lira	0.0006	1.0125	0.3412	0.0847	1321.35	0.8158	-	11.41	3.3870
NL Guilder	0.4983	88.73	0.2889	74.24	66.33	0.7149	87.547	-	2.9765
FR Franc	0.1678	0.2380	0.1004	24.9255	22.27	0.3401	33.58	33.5800	-

Middle Eastern Currencies									
Currency	USD	JOD	SAR	BAH	QAT	KUW	AED	LBP	EGP
US Dollar	1.7802	0.7090	3.7503	0.3770	3.6405	0.3054	3.6728	1918.00	3.4158
Jordan Dinar	1.4104	-	5.2896	0.5317	5.1347	0.4307	5.1803	2136.81	4.8188
Saudi Riyal	0.2688	0.1891	-	0.1005	0.097	0.0814	0.98	403.97	0.9110
Bahrain Dinar	2.65	1.8806	9.9477	-	9.56	0.8101	9.74	4918.57	9.8623
Qatar Dinar	0.2747	0.1945	1.0302	1.0302	-	0.0839	1.01	416.15	0.9385
Kuwait Dinar	3.2744	2.3215	12.2800	1.2344	11.92	-	12.03	4960.71	0.9385
Emirate Dinar	0.2723	0.1930	1.0211	1.0108	0.9912	0.0832	-	412.49	0.9302
Lebanese L1000	0.66	0.4680	2.4754	0.2488	2.4030	0.2015	2.4243	-	2.2551
Egyptian	0.2827	0.2075	1.0977	0.1103	1.0558	0.0894	1.0750	443.44	-

Energy									
Oil	Last	Review							
Brent	14.67	13.88							
W. Texas	16.00	15.91							
Bonny	14.67	13.88							
Dubai	12.90	12.46							
U.S. Gas	158.00	158.00							

Mid-East Currencies									
Currency	USD	DEM	GBP	CHF	JPY				
SA Riyal	0.2688	0.4748	0.15002	0.39741	35.5252				
AE Dirham	0.2723	0.48487	0.1634	0.40579	38.2753				
KW Dinar	3.2744	5.8309	1.99502	4.88043	436.3				
BH Dinar	0.3770	0.72367	1.99186	3.95257	353.357				
CY Pound	1.9063	3.3938	1.4136	2.8391	263.788				

Libor Fixing									
Period	-1-	-3-	-6-	-12-					
Cncy	Month	Months	Months	Year					
USD	8.8441	8.7422	8.8368	8.9608					
GBP	7.3802	7.4427	7.4427	7.3888					
JPY	0.6354	0.6979	0.7292	0.7800					
DEM	3.8875	3.8229	3.9271	4.1148					
FRF	3.6371	1.8978	1.8229	2.0104					
CHF	1.8729	3.6465	3.7599	3.9844					
ITL	5.4290	6.0890	4.9110	-					

JOD Cross Rates									
Currency	Buy	Sell							
US Dollar	0.708	0.710							
GB Sterling	1.1778	1.1834							
DE Mark	0.396	0.398							
CH Franc	0.4733	0.4757							
FR Franc	0.1181	0.1187							
JP Yen	0.6305	0.6332							
NL Guilder	0.3518	0.3534							
IT Lira	0.4014	0.4054							

* Source: Central Bank of Jordan.

Main Equity Indices									
Bourse	Index	Value	Chng	% Chng	High	Low	Pt Ch		
New York	DOW JONES	8290.2	103.13	1.13	8281.91	9448.33	9147.07		
New York	S&P 500	1129.82	8.62	0.76	1130.82	1121	1121		
London	FT-SE 100	8010.3	82	1.38	8025.1	8532.7	8528.3		
Tokyo	NIKKEI 225	15801.1	-40.18	-0.26	15888.8	15463.8	15841.3		
Paris	CAC 40	3974.25	93.33	2.4	3985.81	3948.28	3980.92		
Frankfurt	DAX	6314.86	207.22	4.06	6337.22	6251.41	6107.44		

AMMAN FINANCIAL MARKET												
HOUSING BANK CENTER - AMMAN - JORDAN												
TELEPHONE: 607371 / 607179												
ORGANIZED MARKET SHARE PRICE LIST FOR MONDAY 04/05/1998												
PAST 12 MONTHS HIGH	PAST 12 MONTHS LOW	COMPANY'S NAME	P / E	DIV.	NO. OF TRADING	NO. OF SHARES	VALUE TRADED JD	OPEN PRICE	CLOSE PRICE	CHANGE		
S 355.500	170.000	ARAB BANK	14.0	1.27	15	360	61585	171.00	171.00	-		
S 2.340	1.660	JOR. NATIONAL BK.	13.7	4.14	4	512	864	1.69	1.69	-		
S 3.540	1.250	BANK OF JORDAN	4.2	0.00	2	1000	1340	1.34	1.34	-		
S 6.150	4.660	TOR HOUSING BK.	19.4	3.37	67	28061	171465	6.08	6.12	0.04		
S 4.180	1.790	JOR. KUNAT BANK	9	0.00	6	1870	3404	1.81	1.83	0.02		
S 1.590	1.590	JOR. GULF BANK	3.9	10.61	3	1100	726	0.66	0.66	-		
S 4.020	1.750	JOR. ISLAMIC BANK	18.4	0.00	18	58582	1025294	1.77	1.80	0.03		
BANK SECTOR TOTALS		INDEX: 241.95 %CHG: +0.14 114 618755 1264678										
S 1.350	1.350	ARABIAN SEAS INSUR.	54.9	0.00	2	2875	2875	1.00	1.00	-		
S 2.400	1.590	JOR. FRENCH INSUR.	6.0	11.74	1	250	533	2.12	2.13	0.01		
INSURANCE SECTOR TOTALS		INDEX: 121.58 %CHG: +0.05 3 3125 3408										
S 5.500	2.450	RIEDER KEMMEL	79.2	0.00	2	7314	35327	4.95	4.83	-0.12		
S 1.550	0.970	RAIL. PORTFOLIO	41.5	0.00	2	400	416	1.02	1.04	0.02		
S 1.220	0.850	REAL ESTATE INV.	16.6	0.00	3	900	765	0.85	0.85	-0.05		
S 1.390	0.360	JORDAN INTL. TRAD.	9	0.00	1	1000	350	0.35	0.35	-0.01		
S 1.480	1.100	KID. EAST BOTTLES	7	0.00	1	500	550	1.10	1.10	-		
S 4.660	2.890	ARAB INTL. INV. EDUC.	9.9	2.00	2	1500	6000	4.00	4.00	-		
S 1.090	0.900	ZARBA EDUCATION	0.75	0.00	3	2714	2714	0.92	0.92	-		
S 1.830	1.450	UNIFIED CO.	6.6	7.33	8	2600	3900	1.58	1.50	-0.08		
SERVICE SECTOR TOTALS		INDEX: 114.45 %CHG: -0.13 21 17164 50622										
S 4.450	2.450	JOR. CENTENT FACT.	14.6	4.47	34	17250	42323	2.46	2.46	-		
S 1.250	0.900	JOR. PETROL. REFINERY	9.9	8.71	23	6000	61190	10.45	10.20	-0.25		
S 2.070	1.100	INDUSTRIAL COSM. JOR.	9	0.00	1	100	118	1.18	1.18	-		
S 5.740	3.440	ARAB PHARM. MFG.	14.7	3.74	63	16800	90266	5.42	5.35	-0.07		
S 7.200	1.900	JOR. CERAMIC IND.	8.2	5.42	3	1000	1850	1.90	1.85	-0.05		
S 2.940	0.800	JORDAN OIL	10.48	0.00	8	90000	238800	2.65	2.65	-		
S 1.450	1.020	JOR. PIPES MANFACT.	4.00	3	1600	1898	1.19	1.19	-			
S 2.330	1.890	GENERAL KILLING	7	4.64	1	500	735	1.51	1.51	-0.02		
S 1.420	0.750	RAPIA ENDORES	0	5.00	2	600	492	0.82	0.82	-		
S 6.350	4.400	AR. ALDAMA OV. INV.	7.0	0.07	2	1710	9866	5.79	5.77	-0.02		
S 3.390	2.220	ARAB ALUM. TRD.	20.5	9.03	10	3564	9818	2.75	2.77	0.02		
S 4.000	2.570	INVESTMENT & TRUST	6.00	0.00	8	2600	500	0.48	0.48	-		
S 1.760	0.370	INTERVED. PETRO. CHEM.	9	0.00	8	4550	1820	0.40	0.40	-		
S 3.000	0.920	NATL. CABLE WIRE. NTC	27.4	0.00	12	4000	4560	1.14	1.14	-		
S 1.560	1.150	ARAB PHARM. CHEM.	13.9	4.45	2	6801	6801	1.33	1.33	-0.05		
S 1.940	1.100	INV. KEM. IND.	37.9	6.90	8	2800	2411	0.85	0.87	0.02		
S 1.200	0.680	JOR. IRON. RESOURCES	9.3	14.49	7	1650	1123	0.69	0.69	-		
S 1.080	0.810	JOR. INTL. CABLE CO.	12.4	10.49	4	1760	880	0.88	0.88	-		
S 1.290	0.900	EL. WAY READY WARE	47.5	0.00	8	2372	3205	1.36	1.35	-0.01		
S 1.310	0.980	INTL. TOBACCO	7.4	5.56	19	24475	07699	1.26	1.26	-		
S 1.220	0.860	UNION CH. & YEG.	11.4	0.00	3	5650	6479	1.16	1.14	-0.02		
S 1.660	0.860	JORDAN STEEL	9.89	0.00	2	63	73	0.73	0.73	-		
S 0.690	0.570	MID. EAST. COMPLEX	10.5	0.00	12	58000	33750	0.59	0.58	-0.01		
S 1.100	0.720	ARAB INT. FOOD FACT.	54.9	0.00	1	3000	3000	1.00	1.00	-		
INDUSTRIAL SECTOR TOTALS		INDEX: 105.04 %CHG: -0.28 263 306179 616839										
GRAND TOTAL		INDEX: 167.66 %CHG: -0.01 461 954223 1934946										
PARALLEL MARKET SHARE PRICE LIST FOR MONDAY 04/05/1998												
PAST 12 MONTHS HIGH	PAST 12 MONTHS LOW	COMPANY'S NAME	P / E	DIV.	NO. OF TRADING	NO. OF SHARES	VALUE TRADED JD	OPEN PRICE	CLOSE PRICE	CHANGE		
S 620	480	MOCE. EXP. REPT. NAIN.	28.5	0.00	3	1750	918	0.53	0.52	-0.01		
S 530	340	JOR. TRADE PAPER	9	0.00	2	11000	4510	0.41	0.41	-		
S 360	260	ARAB FIN. GROUP	0.2525	0.00	15	51000	18100	0.48	0.48	-0.01		
S 1.010	0.720	AL-SHARQ INV. CO.	7	0.00	2	42000	22000	1.00	1.00	-		
S 785	620	AL-DANAKIL	37.4	0.00	2	1500	860	0.65	0.64	-0.01		
S 2.220	1.000	CHENURY INVEST. GROUP	0.00	0.00	2	6750	10405	1.54	1.50	-0.04		
S 600	370	ARAB FOOD & MED.	9	0.00	7	22000	10340	0.46	0.47	0.01		
S 470	240	ARAB INTL. INV. TRD.	35.7	0.00	10	7600	2319	0.32	0.31	-0.01		
S 470	240	NATL. TEXTILE	7	0.45	7	1072	1072	0.32	0.32	-		
S 650	340	NATL. MILIT. ENG. NAMICO	9	0.00	58	221000	86216	0.38	0.40	0.02		
S 1.230	850	READY MIX CONCRETE	9.0	0.00	1	2250	1890	0.85	0.84	-0.01		
S 730	550	EAST PHARM.	9	0.00	9	2346	9	0.68	0.68	-		
S 950	550	ADVANCED PHARM. IND.	6	0.00	9	1259	792	0.63	0.63	-		
S 710	430	NATL. POULTRY	9	0.00	37	267000	146680	0.57	0.55	-0.02		
S 950	470	OPTICAL REPAIRING 755	2	0.00	1	1000	330	0.58	0.58	-		
GRAND TOTAL		INDEX: 167 617336 309108										

Orthodoxi, Jazireh vie for championship title tonight

By Aileen Bannayan
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Al Jazireh rewrote basketball records last year when they ended a 30-year drought to win the First Division Basketball Championship.

The question fans and officials are unsure about is can they keep the trophy this year?

The 1998 championship comes to an end tonight when current leaders Al Orthodoxi face Al Jazireh in the match that will decide the champion.

Despite Al Orthodoxi's current lead, a win by any score by both teams would guarantee the trophy as both teams are tied in scoring average in their matches.

Al Orthodoxi were the only team to beat Al Jazireh twice 73-69 in the preliminaries and 65-61 in the first playoff match. They therefore have +8 points but Al

Jazireh's only win over Al Orthodoxi, 92-84 in the preliminary round, gave them also +8 points, therefore tying the score difference.

Al Orthodoxi, who finished third last year, showed an impressive form throughout their matches and had an easier path when they eliminated rivals Al Ahli from the top two positions.

Al Orthodoxi beat Al Ahli 74-49 and 69-37 in the preliminaries and 84-61 and 82-61 in playoffs, while Al Jazireh beat Al Ahli 75-69, and 57-53 in the preliminaries and 78-63 and 57-43 in the playoffs.

Al Jazireh are just out of a week-long training camp in Irbid and coach Fadi Sabbah

was reported saying that he was "satisfied with the team's physical and mental preparedness."

Al Orthodoxi coach Murad Barakat declined comment saying "we are ready."

Al Orthodoxi who held on to the title with an undisputed reign from 1976-1989 before conceding the title to Al Ahli who were champions in 1990, 1992, 1993 and 1994.

Al Orthodoxi came back to win in 1991, 1995 and 1996. Last season's runner up Al Ahli finished third this season with an incomplete line-up showing the effects of inadequate pre-season training. The team's inconsistent form forced them to rely on

the individual efforts of Faisal Nsour and Yousef Zaghloul.

In addition their bench was depleted throughout the playoffs with Mohammad Shamali and Marwan Ma'touq both nursing injuries, and centre Ramez Hammoudeh quitting the team for personal reasons.

Al Jazireh came in fourth, Al Jeel fifth and Al Hussein sixth but remained in the first division after the Jordan Basketball Federation scrapped relegation this year to increase the number of teams to eight.

Tonight's match will be held at 6:15 p.m. at the Sports Palace and will be televised live on JTV.

PLAYOFF STANDINGS

Team	P	W	L	Sr	Sa	Pts
Orthodoxi	13	12	1	1068	721	25
Jazireh	13	11	2	1086	753	24
Ahli	14	6	8	900	907	20

Arsenal show style and steel to clinch title

LONDON (AFP) — Arsenal won the English League title for the first time in seven years in style on Sunday with a crushing 4-0 win over Everton in front of their own fans at Highbury.

The victory, courtesy of two goals by Marc Overmars, one from skipper Tony Adams and an own goal by Croatian defender Slaven Bilic, puts the Gunners an unassailable seven points clear of defending Premiership champions Manchester United with just two games remaining.

While the 38,000 fans packed into Highbury erupted into wild celebrations at the final whistle, Everton were left contemplating a possible future in the first division.

The result leaves the Merseyside giants, one of the so-called 'Big Five' clubs in English football, in the third relegation place one point adrift of Bolton with one match left to play.

Everton rarely threatened a confident, slick Arsenal side who recorded a Premiership record 10th consecutive win in English football which the north London club last won in 1991 under George Graham.

Ian Wright, Arsenal's record goalscorer, completed a perfect day for the Arsenal fans when he came on as a second half substitute after a four-month lay-off through injury.

But Wright was upstaged by long-serving Highbury hero Adams, who sealed the rout with a stunning strike two minutes from time.

Gunners boss Arsene Wenger said winning the title was the most satisfying moment in his whole career.

"Professionally it is certainly the biggest moment because it is not easy to come to England to win the championship," said the Frenchman, who has previously won titles in his own country as coach of Monaco.

"The star this season was every player — and that means the team spirit."

Wenger said the turning point of the season came when Arsenal beat Manchester United 1-0 at Old Trafford on March 14.

"We had some difficult moments in November and December so it became very difficult for us," he said.



Arsenal's captain Tony Adams holds up the Premier League trophy after his team defeated Everton 4-0 to take the title (Reuters photo)

"We played first for Europe, for a Champions' League place and I think the turning point was when we won at Manchester United. We believe we could win it if we won our games."

"I think the difference at the end was in the two confrontations with Manchester United."

Arsenal defender Lee Dixon, a title winner with the Gunners in 1989 and 1991, said: "It is a brilliant feeling. This team is just phenomenal — especially the boys in the midfield who have been superb."

It was a first League title for 31-year-old England centre-back Martin Keown, who admitted: "I thought it was never going to come."

"It was an incredible run we put together. Manchester United set the standard and we went after them."

Overmars added: "It is absolutely great. My first year and we have won the Premiership."

Highbury erupted after five minutes as Arsenal grabbed the vital opening goal — and Bilic was left hanging his head in despair.

Emmanuel Petit, the Premiership player of the month for April, swept over a

corner from the left and Bilic, under pressure from Arsenal captain Tony Adams at the far post, headed the ball into the back of the net attempting to clear.

The Gunners scored a second just before the half hour mark to all but wrap up their 11th ever league title with a brilliant individual goal by Overmars.

The Dutch winger burst forward from the halfway mark, accelerating clear of the Everton defence before cutting into the area and firing a low shot which Myhre got a hand to but could not stop from squeezing over the line.

Overmars struck again 12 minutes after the interval with another blinding run and clinical finish.

Once again the Merseysiders had no answer to the Dutchman's electric pace as he raced 40 yards towards goal before cutting a neat shot across the goalmouth into the far right corner.

Adams, who has bounced back from a rash of personal problems including alcoholism, completed his remarkable recovery by scoring Arsenal's fourth with a thundering left foot drive from the edge of the area.

Sampras claims Atlanta crown

ATLANTA (AFP) — Top-seeded Pete Sampras snapped his four-year title drought on clay by holding off second seed Jason Stoltenberg 6-7 (2/7), 6-3, 7-6 (7/4) in the final of ATP event here Sunday.

It was a second tour title of the season for Sampras, who regained the world's number-one ranking from Chile's Marcelo Rios this week. It was also his 54th career tournament triumph for the American who pocketed a winner's cheque of \$45,000.

The 27-year-old Sampras last won a title on clay at Rome in 1994, his last appearance in a claycourt final until Sunday. His only other claycourt crown came at Kitzbuhel, Austria in 1992. Sampras did reach the final here in 1991, losing to Andre Agassi.

Overcoming 15 aces by Stoltenberg, Sampras managed to capitalize on just two of 16 break point opportunities, also taking advantage of 13 double faults by the Aussie. Sampras won on his first match point to survive the two-hour, 40-minute duel.

Although he struggled throughout the week, Sampras continued his recent success in finals, as he improved to 11-1 in his last 12 finals, including a victory at the Advanta Championships in Philadelphia in February. His only loss in a final during this streak came against Agassi in the final of the Sybase Open in San Jose, California, in February.

In addition, he upped his record to 19-1 lifetime in finals against players ranked outside the Top 20. Stoltenberg is currently ranked 42nd in the world.

The 28-year-old Stoltenberg suffered his second straight loss in the final at this event, and third loss in an ATP Tour final this year. Stoltenberg, who lost to Marcelo Filippini in last year's final, also posted runner-up finishes at Adelaide, Australia, and Scottsdale, Arizona, earlier this year.

The Aussie was seeking his fifth career ATP Tour title and first since last year at Coral

Jordan rallies Chicago for victory Jazz eliminate Rockets; Knicks advance

WASHINGTON (AFP) — Another struggle and another Michael Jordan explosion added up to another victory for Chicago Sunday, over Charlotte in Game One of their National Basketball Association second-round series.

Jordan had 35 points and 11 rebounds as the Bulls overcame a 15-point deficit and shut down the Charlotte Hornets 83-70 to take a 1-0 lead in their best-of-seven Eastern Conference semi-final series.

The match-up in Chicago opened the second round of the playoffs, but first there was some first-round business to complete.

At Salt Lake City, the brute strength of Karl Malone and Greg Ostertag overpowered the aging Houston Rockets and carried the Jazz into the Western Conference semi-finals.

Malone scored 31 points on 12-of-22 shooting and led every key surge. He scored the first two baskets of the game as Utah got off to a quick start and never trailed.

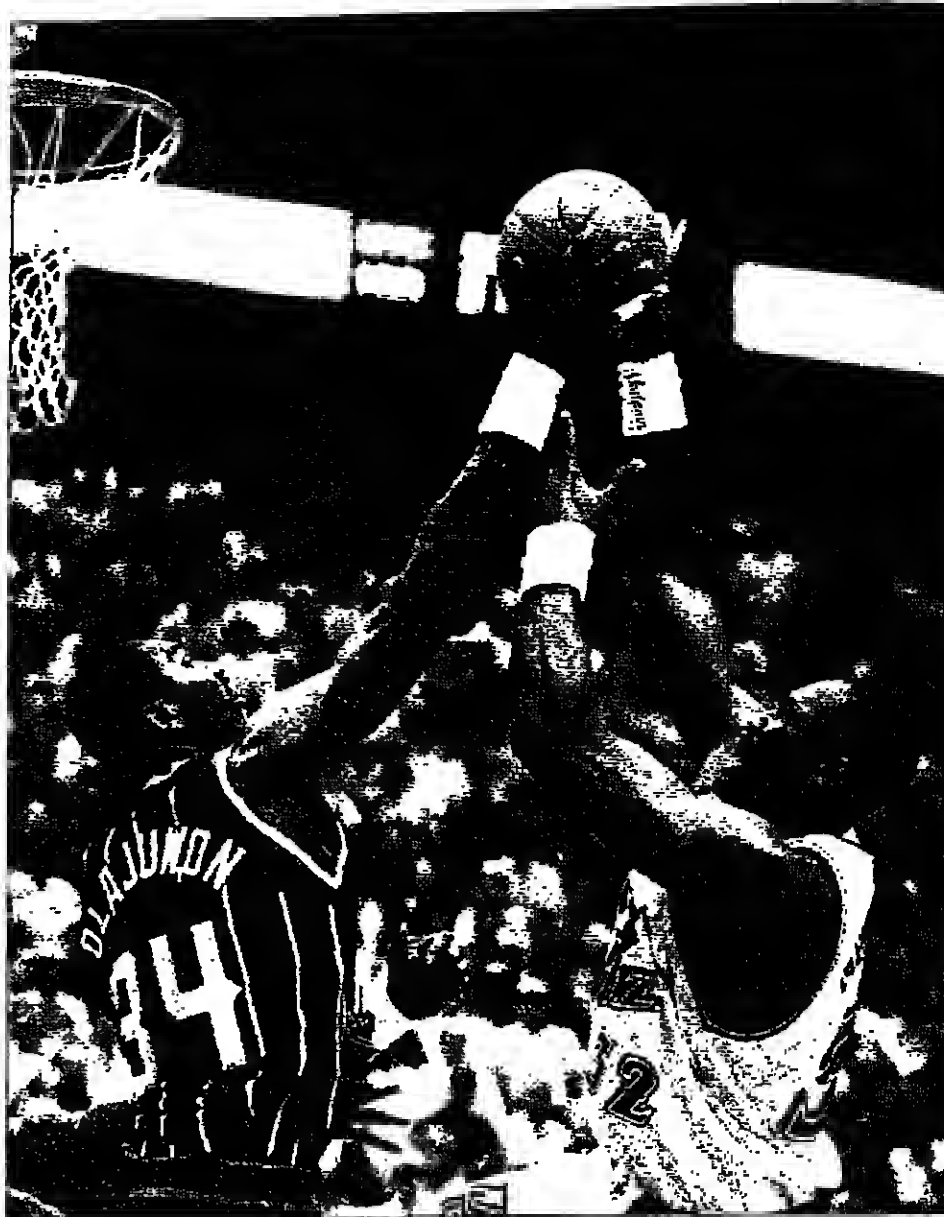
Ostertag scored six points, all in the fourth quarter. He added five rebounds and seven blocks and helped contain Hakeem Olajuwon, who again shot poorly and scored 15 points.

Jeff Hornacek added 15 points for Utah, which battled back from a 2-1 series deficit and eliminated Houston for the second straight year. They'll meet San Antonio in the second round.

In Miami, the Knicks made do without suspended Larry Johnson and Chris Mills, leading from start to finish in a 98-81 victory over the Heat in the deciding Game Five of their Eastern Conference first-round series.

Houston led the way with 30 points, including 20 in the second half. Starks had 22 points, including five three-pointers.

Tim Hardaway, who lit up the Knicks for 38 points in last year's Game Seven victory, sparked Miami with 18 points in the second half after scoring just three



Houston Rockets center Hakeem Olajuwon (L) gets a hand on the ball as Utah Jazz forward Karl Malone (R) goes up for a shot during the fourth quarter of their NBA playoff game. Malone scored a game high 31 points to help the Jazz get past the Rockets 84-70. The Jazz won the best-of-five series 3-2 (Reuters photo)

points in the first half.

But it was not enough to offset the performances of Houston and Starks, or the absence of teammate Alonzo Mourning, also suspended after trading ineffectual punches with Johnson in an embarrassing melee at the end of Game Four.

Johnson will also miss New York's second-round opener against Indiana.

Chicago, the defending champions who were the only team to sweep their first-round opponents 3-0, got off to a shaky start and trailed 23-15 after one quarter.

After being outscored by

counterpart Bobby Phillips in the first period, however, Jordan came alive. Relying less on his jumper than usual, Jordan led surges in the second and third quarters that gave the Bulls control. He also held Phillips scoreless after the opening period.

Scottie Pippen scored 25 points and Dennis Rodman pulled down 14 rebounds and totally outplayed Anthony Mason as the Bulls stayed unbeaten in the playoffs. Game Two is Wednesday at Chicago.

Although the two-time defending champions swept the New Jersey Nets in the

first round, they wasted a 14-point fourth-quarter lead in the opener and were pushed to overtime before rallying behind Jordan, who scored 39 points.

Glen Rice scored 25 points but shot poorly for the Hornets, who managed just 25 points in the middle two quarters and threatened the NBA all-time playoff low five days after matching it against the Atlanta Hawks.

Charlotte eliminated Atlanta in four games to advance to the conference semi-finals for the first time in five years.

Hingis beats Novotna to win German title

HAMBURG (AP) — Top-ranked Martina Hingis gave herself a boost before the French Open by beating Jana Novotna 6-3, 7-5 in the final of the German Grand Prix to win her first title on European red clay Sunday.

In the 10 of the past 11 years, at least one of the finalists of this event has also went on to contest the French Open final, and four champions from here also won the title in the only Grand Slam on clay.

Last year, Iva Majoli won here and became the French Open champion later by beating Hingis in the final. It was the only of the four Grand Slam events Hingis failed to win last year.

This year's French Open starts May 25. Hingis, who trailed 4-2 in the second set, rallied to level the score but had trouble to close the match, needing four match points.

"I had to fight for every point, she wasn't giving much away," Hingis said.

The 17-year-old Swiss collected \$79,000 for her victory and leads the WTA Tour with three titles of the year. She has now won 17 titles in a short but brilliant career.

The victory brought her record for 1998 to 25-3.

In a match pitting one of the youngest and one of the oldest players on the tour, Hingis took advantage of two errors by Novotna to win the first set.

Novotna, 29, put a weak volley into the net and then hit a backhand into the net to drop her serve and give Hingis a 5-3 lead. The Swiss teen-ager won the set with a backhand volley.

With rain clouds gathering over the center

court, tournament officials quickly pulled over the retractable roof and Novotna started playing better, going a break up.

"The balls got heavier and she started playing better," Hingis said.

"It was difficult to win points against her today, she got a lot of balls back," she said. "I tried to fight and make the points shorter," Hingis said.

A volley that took a strange bounce off the line helped Hingis get back into the match by tying at 4-4.

"When I was up, that's when it became more difficult for me," Novotna said. "She became more aggressive, she hit harder. When you are up, that's when she steps up and raises her game."

"Her consistency in her ground strokes and her ability to keep me behind made the difference," said Novotna, a Czech who was seeded second and who is No. 3 in the world.

"She doesn't make many mistakes, no double faults, you don't get any easy points," Novotna said.

Hingis, who now holds a 6-2 career edge over Novotna, beat the Czech only once before on clay, three years ago in the same tournament.

Hingis was 14 than and it was her first victory over a top 10 player.

Meligeni wins Czech Open

PRAGUE (AFP) — Fernando Meligeni of Brazil won the \$365,000 Czech Open ATP Tour event here on Sunday, beating local favourite Slava Dosedel of the Czech Republic 6-1, 6-4 to pocket a winners cheque for \$48,200 and 150 ranking points.

In a match delayed for three hours because of heavy rain on the Stivanice arena's centre court it was the Brazilian who adapted himself to the conditions the better as he constantly drove back his opponent with a series of powerful top-spin returns.

Although generally better known as a doubles player, it was left-hander Meligeni's third Tour victory in all, but his first this year.

Dosedel was again hampered by the fever which had caused him so much discomfort in Saturday's tough three-set semi-final win over Nicolas Lapentti of Ecuador.

And the strain told as 27-year-old Meligeni, who ousted Romania's Dinu Pescariu 7-6 (7/5), 7-6 (7/2), in his semi, raced to a 5-0 lead inside 19 minutes and wrapped up the opening set in 30 minutes.

Betis stay in hunt for Champions League spot

MADRID (AFP) — Betis stayed in the hunt for a Champions League spot after a 1-1 draw with Real Madrid Sunday.

The Seville side, who finished second in the league, drew 1-1 with Real Madrid in the first leg of their UEFA Cup tie.

Betis, who were 1-0 down at half-time, came back to level the score in the second half.

The draw kept Betis in the hunt for a Champions League spot, which they would need to win to qualify for the competition.

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PHILADELPHIA '2'

Robert De Niro & Sharon Stone ... in

CASINO

Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 9:00

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CONCORD '1'

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CONCORD '2'

ISMAILIA RAYEH GAI - KAMANANA

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Betis stay in hunt for Champions League spot

MADRID (AFP) — Betis stayed in the hunt for Champions League spot next season as two goals from Nigerian striker Finidi George brought a 3-1 win at champions Barcelona on Sunday.

Barca wrapped up the title last month and are a mammoth 13 points ahead of second-placed Athletic Bilbao.

And the Catalan club, who had earlier taken the lead through Dutchman Winston Bogarde, appeared none too disconcerted at their eighth defeat of the campaign.

But the big question now is whether European Cup finalists Real Madrid will see runners up spot elude them.

Real host Zaragoza on Monday knowing that if they lose the final showdown to Juventus later this month they could well miss out altogether on Europe's premier club competition next year.

Bilbao hammered Real Oviedo 3-0 to go a point clear of Real on 61 points but having played a game more, while Real Sociedad, Mallorca and Betis are all locked on 59 points and can still take second spot with two games left.

MILAN (AFP) — Juventus moved closer to their 25th league championship on Sunday, when the Italian league leaders and their title rivals Inter Milan both clocked up 0-0 draws.

Juventus had plenty of possession but failed to make it count at Vicenza, whose Pasquale Luiso was unlucky not to snatch a winner.

Inter were held by Piacenza, their first 0-0 of the season coming despite the one-way traffic at San Siro, and they failed to narrow a four-point gap on Juventus with just two matches left.

Inter's failure to score means that Juventus will now be putting the champagne on ice — ready to be opened next weekend when they should be crowned champions against Bologna.

Ronaldo hit the post and Inter's Nigerian striker Nwankwo Kanu failed to put away the easiest of rebounds in the 24th minute, while Argentine Diego Simeone also hit the woodwork soon after the re-start.

It was disappointing for Inter's goalkeeping coach Luciano Castellini, who stood in for Gigi Simoni and deputy coach Sergio Pini, both suspended after last week's con-



Chicago White Sox Ray Durham dives to catch a short fly ball hit by Anaheim Angels Garrett Anderson for the out in the third inning in Anaheim, Ca. Durham's catch ended the inning. The White Sox won 12-1 (Reuters photo)

Hingis returns to scene of breakthrough — Italian Open

ROME (AP) — It was in Rome two years ago that Martina Hingis made her breakthrough. Then 15 years old, she ousted top-ranked Steffi Graf in the quarterfinals of the Italian Open in the biggest win of her short career.

Now she's back as the World's No. 1 women's player, fresh off a tournament victory in Germany and with a sizzling match record of 25-3 this year.

And in a clear sign of the generational change in women's tennis, Graf, the dominant player over the last decade but lately bobbled by injuries, is seriously considering retiring.

Hingis heads the field in

the \$926,000 Italian Open that began play Monday, the major clay court test before the French Open, the only Grand Slam played on the slow surface.

The draw is the strongest in the tournament's history, with 18 of the top 20 players entered. The top eight seeds received a first round bye.

Sisters Venus and Serena Williams are featured in opening day matchups. Venus, the No. 9 seed, faced Yayuk Basuki, while the younger Serena followed on center court against No. 11 Nathalie Tauziat.

Hingis, who missed the Italian Open because of injury last year, returns on the heels of a 6-3, 7-5 victory

over Jana Novotna in Hamburg. It was her third tournament title this year — the most on the tour — and her first on European red clay.

She enters as a strong favorite, but faces a strong group of veterans — Novotna, Amanda Coetzer, Mary Pierce, Arantxa Sanchez.

Vicario. Conchita Martinez, whose run of four consecutive Italian titles was stopped by Pierce last year, is also back.

Just behind them are a group of talented players of Hingis' generation, including Anna Kournikova, the Williams sisters and Mirjana Lucic, who won a

title Sunday in her native Croatia.

Organisers had hoped that Graf, off the tour since March because of an injured hamstring, would play. But the German announced over the weekend that she would skip Rome and the French Open.

Graf has been trying to come back from reconstructive surgery on her left knee. The former No. 1 player has slipped to No. 33 in the rankings.

"I've come to the point where I can clearly see the end of my career," she told the German magazine Focus.

SCOREBOARD

National League	
Florida	1
San Francisco	12
Montreal	4
Philadelphia	5
Los Angeles	10
NY Mets	5
Cincinnati	5
St Louis	8

San Diego	0
Atlanta	8
Arizona	1
Houston	3
Pittsburgh	5
Colorado	2
Milwaukee	3
Chicago Cubs	5

American League	
Boston	2
Cleveland	10
Baltimore	2
NY Yankees	10
Toronto	6
Seattle	10
White Sox	12

Texas	1
Tampa Bay	8
Minnesota	0
Kansas City	1
Oakland	3
Detroit	6
Anaheim	1

NBA playoffs	
First Round (series best-of-five)	
Eastern Conference	
New York	98
Miami	81

(New York win series 3-2)	
Western Conference	
Utah	84
Houston	70
(Utah win series 3-2)	
Second Round (series best-of-seven)	
Chicago	83
Charlotte	70
(Chicago lead series 1-0)	

Spanish Championship	
Sporting Gijon	0
Real Sociedad	2
Majorca	2
Atletico Madrid	1
R. Santander	1
Espanyol	1
Celta Vigo	3
Compostela	3
Athletic Bilbao	3
Real Oviedo	0
Tenerife	2
Salamanca	0
Real Valladolid	0
Merida	0
Barcelona	1
Real Betis	3

Atlanta ATP Tour	
Final	
Pete Sampras (USA x1)	bt Jason Stoltenberg (Aus x2)
6-7 (2/7), 6-3, 7-6 (7/4)	

Juventus put the champagne on ice

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Ronaldo hit the post and Inter's Nigerian striker Nwankwo Kanu failed to put away the easiest of rebounds in the 24th minute, while Argentine Diego Simeone also hit the woodwork soon after the re-start.

It was disappointing for Inter's goalkeeping coach Luciano Castellini, who stood in for Gigi Simoni and deputy coach Sergio Pini, both suspended after last week's con-

traversal defeat to Juventus.

"We tried everything we could, but they were defending tooth and nail," Castellini said. "And their goalkeeper made some great saves."

Further down the Serie A, Udinese, Parma and AS Roma have all booked their places in next season's UEFA Cup.

Udinese swept to a 3-1 win over Napoli which also kept their German ace Oliver Bierhoff top of the Serie A scoring charts with 25 goals.

Paolo Poggi struck in the fourth minute, but Napoli's talented young striker Claudio Bellucci was felled in the area barely 10 minutes later and Francesco Turrini converted the penalty.

However, Bierhoff then added a brace from close range, one just before the break and one just before the end.

"We're now third in the table and that's extremely important for us," said coach Alberto Zaccheroni.

"Now we've got to defend that position, because for a young provincial team like

Udinese it's something extraordinary."

Parma drew 2-2 with 10-man Sampdoria, who had midfielder Marco Franceschetti sent off in the first half.

Enrico Chiesa opened the scoring against his old club with a superb free-kick but Brazilian striker Paco equalised for Sampdoria.

Argentinian Nestor Sensini put Parma back in front only for Frenchman Alain Boghossian to level with a bullet header from an 87th corner.

AS Roma had no difficulty crushing a defenceless AC Milan 5-0.

Just four days after AC Milan lost the Italian Cup final by conceding three goals in 10 minutes against Lazio, they let in another three in just 13 minutes against Roma at the same Olympic stadium.

Frenchman Vincent Candela smacked the ball home from 20 metres in the 16th minute and Francesco Di Biagio quickly added two more, one a penalty and the other a superb left-footed

drive.

Brazilian Paulo Sergio streaked through to make it 4-0 and Marco Delvecchio nodded in the fifth, as Milan coach Fabio Capello surely reflected on his decision last summer to leave European Cup finalists Real Madrid.

Capello, who was wooed back to Milan by club president Silvio Berlusconi, held a press conference which lasted all of 10 seconds.

"I'd like to personally apologise to the fans and to Mr. Berlusconi. I am ashamed," he said.

The odds on Roberto Baggio making the World Cup finals continued to shorten after he won and converted a 14th minute penalty — his 19th goal of the season — that set Bologna on their way to a 2-0 lead over Empoli.

Michele Parhamatti nodded home a corner, but Carmine Esposito pulled one back just before the break for Empoli and Massimiliano Capellini converted a penalty in the third minute of injury time to make it 2-2.

Atalanta kept alive their hopes of avoiding the drop by beating Bari 2-0.

Lazio, relaxing between cup finals, lost 1-0 to Lecce on Saturday. They face Inter Milan next week for the UEFA Cup in Paris.

It was a miserable day for

relegation strugglers Brescia, who sacked coach Paolo Ferrario in the morning and went a goal down after just 17 seconds to Fiorentina in the afternoon — before losing 5-1.

Argentinian skipper Gabriel Batistuta slotted home the goal after rounding the keeper and more came from Belgian international Luis Oliveira.

Brazilian ace Edmundo, Batistuta's 20th of the season — a superb chip after being picked out by Edmundo — and Swede Stefan Schwarz.

The win kept Fiorentina on course for Italy's last UEFA Cup slot, and Brescia, whose striker Dario Hubner notched his 16th of the season, on course for the Serie B next season.

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Enqvist outlasts Agassi for BMW title

MUNICH, Germany (AP) — Thomas Enqvist slowed down Andre Agassi's surge back to the top ranks by coming from behind to beat the American in three sets for the BMW Open title Sunday.

Enqvist, a Swede who is also on a comeback after overcoming a series of nagging injuries, won 6-7 (4-7), 7-6 (8-6), 6-3 in a close match that could have gone Agassi's way as well.

"I've never played so well on clay before," Enqvist said.

Agassi was seeking his first tournament victory on European red clay in 10 years and his third title of the year.

"We both played very well during the whole match," Agassi said. "I was improving all the time during the week and it was a perfect preparation for the French Open."

"It's disappointing not to win but all in all, it was a good week. I am not too far

from my best. I am very pleased to have been here this week," Agassi said.

Enqvist, who was seeded seventh, collected \$70,000 for his win.

Agassi, who was eighth-seeded in the \$500,000 tournament, will move one place to No. 19 in the rankings. Enqvist slipped one place past Agassi to No. 18.

Once the No. 1 in the world, Agassi had dropped as low as No. 141 during a disastrous season last year.

"Both of us played extremely well. It's always fun to play him," Enqvist said. "Perhaps I had more luck in the second set."

Enqvist, 24, has now won 13 of his 15 career finals and clinched his second title of the year, after Marseille.

Agassi saved two break points in the 11th game of the second set, before it went to the tiebreak. A forehand winner gave Enqvist the set, although Agassi had been two points away from the title.

The final set saw four breaks of serve in the first four games.

A powerful hitter from the baseline, Enqvist gained a key break of serve with four tremendous returns for a 5-3 lead in the final set and served out the match.

Following a good serve, Enqvist hit a crisp backhand volley that gave Agassi no chance and won after two hours and 15 minutes. He now leads Agassi 3-2 in career showdowns.

Agassi, 28, will now return home to Las Vegas and still has not decided whether he will play the Italian Open that starts a week from Monday.

"I don't know yet. If I go, it'll be good me, but if I don't it won't be too bad. I hope to be seeded for the French Open," he said.

The French Open, the highlight of the European clay-court season, is the only Grand Slam tournament Agassi has never won.

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مكتبة لاد

Holbrooke: Cyprus talks reach 'serious impasse'

NICOSIA (AFP) — U.S. presidential envoy to Cyprus Richard Holbrooke said here on Monday that efforts to revive negotiations between the Turkish- and Greek-Cypriot communities had reached a "serious impasse."

"I don't consider this a crisis. I don't consider it a catastrophe," the special envoy for Cyprus of U.S. President Bill Clinton told a press conference at the end of a four-day visit to the divided Mediterranean island.

Refusing to characterise his visit as a "failure," Mr. Holbrooke acknowledged, however, that the talks had reached "a temporary impasse but a serious one."

"I consider the problems we encountered part of the process and we will remain committed," he said, adding later to AFP that "American disengagement could lead to an escalation of the problem, to a growth in tension."

He said preconditions imposed by Turkish-Cypriot leader Rauf Denktaş had led to the current deadlock in efforts to promote reunification talks between the Turkish-Cypriot and Greek-Cypriot communities.

"Two positions that one side took... [are] making meaningful, substantive exchange extremely difficult at this point," he said, although he stressed he did not "wish to leave the impression that all the problems are on one side."

Mr. Denktaş was insisting on recognition for his breakaway Turkish Republic of

Northern Cyprus (TRNC), which was declared in 1983, and withdrawal of Cyprus's application for membership in the European Union (EU), Mr. Holbrooke said.

"[Denktaş] said that henceforth he does not wish to negotiate the future of the island unless he and his representatives are recognised as a sovereign state," he said.

The United States and other nations do not recognise the TRNC, which is recognised only by Turkey, which has 35,000 troops on the Turkish-occupied northern part of the island.

Mr. Holbrooke described as "unrealistic" the demand that Cyprus withdraw its application to join the EU and placed blame for the current deadlock on the EU decision not to open membership talks with Turkey.

"The European Union was correct in inviting Cyprus to begin talks to join the European Union," he said. "And they were wrong not to invite Turkey to begin the process as well."

"And it is that imbalance which I believe has led to the present impasse," he said.

A Cypriot government spokesman, Christos Stylianides, blamed the deadlock on "Turkish intransigence."

"Due to the intransigence of the Turkish side unfortunately efforts to resume the dialogue between the two communities have failed," he said. "The international community should realise that the Turkish side is exclusively responsible for the absence of progress."

Mr. Denktaş on Monday reiterated his demand for recognition for the TRNC and said the Holbrooke mission had revealed the deep rift between the sides.

"The only proposal made to us by Mr. Holbrooke was for us to sit down at the negotiation table, after which we would become two states," he said. "This is an illusion."

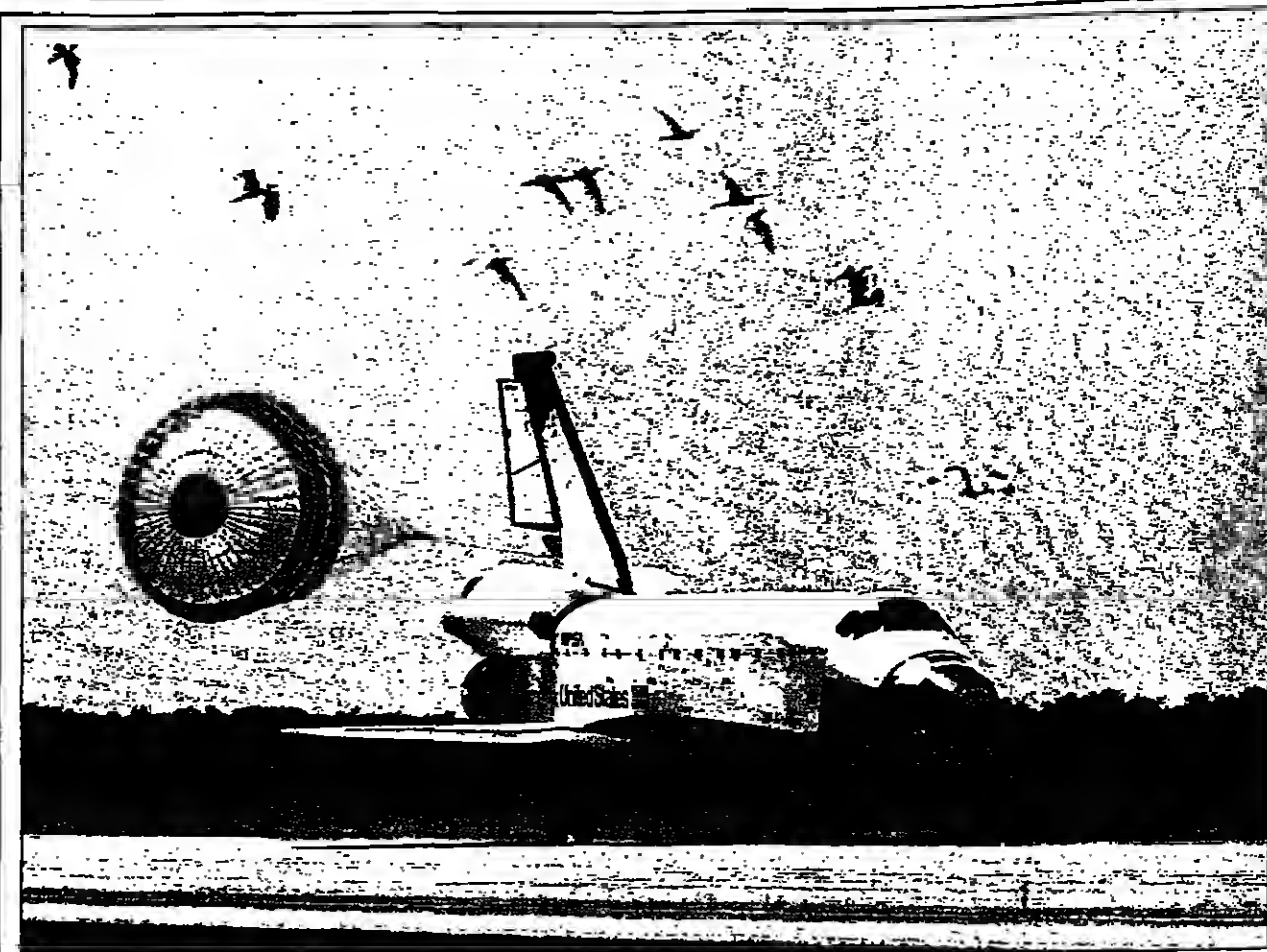
The U.S. emissary said Thomas Miller, the U.S. State Department coordinator for Cyprus, would return here at the end of May and he personally would "come back anytime I can be useful and that both sides want me."

"The United States and Ambassador Tom Miller and myself will remain engaged and available to help the parties reach that long overdue solution," he said.

Mr. Holbrooke said there had been no progress on demilitarisation issues or on easing the tensions raised by the planned purchase of sophisticated S-300 anti-aircraft missiles from Russia by the government of Cypriot President Glafcos Clerides, a Greek-Cypriot.

On a positive note, the U.S. envoy attended the inauguration on Monday of expanded telephone links between the Turkish- and Greek-Cypriot sides of the island.

Cyprus has been divided since 1974 when Turkey occupied its northern third in response to a Greek-Cypriot coup in Nicosia aimed at uniting the island with Greece.



7 PEOPLE, 2000 CREATURES BACK ON EARTH: The space shuttle Columbia touches down at the Kennedy Space Centre Sunday, ending a 16-day mission as the drag parachute is deployed. Columbia's crew of seven and more than 2,000 creatures, including mice, rats, fish, snails and crickets, served as test subjects for the shuttle's \$99 million study of the brain and nervous system (Reuters photo)

Arab League urges end to clan fighting in Somalia

CAIRO (AFP) — The Arab League on Monday urged rival Somali factions to observe an immediate ceasefire in their battling which has claimed dozens of lives and "complicated" efforts to restore stability in the country.

The Somali National Front (SNF), dominated by members of the Marehan clan, have been fighting militiamen loyal to Mohammed Said Hirsi "Morgan," warlord of the Indian Ocean Port of Kismayo, where the fighting is raging.

Arab League assistant secretary general for Arab affairs, Ahmed Ben Heli, called on the two groups "to observe an immediate ceasefire in Kismayo."

"These factions will bear full responsibility for the fighting and for complicating the situation given that they are among the Somali factions who signed the December Cairo Declaration on peace," he told reporters.

Mr. Milo, who will leave the ruling Likud Party to make his bid, said the impetus behind his decision to run came from the religious interference in a performance celebrating Israel's 50th anniversary last week.

Ultra-Orthodox politicians objected to a scantily-clad modern dance piece set to the tune of a religious song and insisted that the dancers cover up, triggering a walkout by the Basheva troupe minutes before the show started.

"The religious censorship, which was applied by an extremist religious segment on the Basheva performance, was a crisis point in the development of the state of Israel," Mr. Milo told a press conference.

"My aim is to neutralise the leverage of religious extremists which is used today by a group which is not large but enjoys great political power."

In November 1993, Mr. Milo was elected as mayor of Tel Aviv.

Haim Ramon, a senior figure in the opposition Labour Party, said the secular public is split more or less evenly between the Labour and Likud. He said Mr. Milo's entry into the premier's race could force a runoff.

"It is the beginning of the 'big bang,'" Mr. Ramon said on Israel army radio. "Much of the public wants to see a new party. There is discomfort with both of the big parties among a very wide spectrum of the public."

Yossi Sarid, leader of the liberal Meretz Party, warned that a new political faction could boost Mr. Netanyahu's chances for reelection.

Mr. Milo did not name his new party and said its members would include many new faces to Israeli politics as well as present members of both the Likud and Labour parties.

Emphasising the need for internal unity and mutual tolerance, Mr. Milo had little to say on Mideast peacemaking except to say he believed a settlement could be reached with the Palestinians.

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Former Mossad official sets up peace tent at Netanyahu's house

TEL AVIV (AFP) — The former deputy chief of the Mossad spy agency has set up a "peace tent" outside the official residence of Benjamin Netanyahu, saying Monday he hoped to encourage the Israeli prime minister to advance stalled negotiations with the Palestinians.

David Kimche, who also served as the director general of the Israeli foreign ministry in the early 1990s, urged Mr. Netanyahu to be flexible in talks Monday in London with U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright on efforts to break the deadlock in peace negotiations.

A large sign outside the tent across the street from Mr. Netanyahu's residence in central Jerusalem read, "May you depart peacefully and return with peace."

"I call this a peace tent, not a protest tent," Mr. Kimche told Israel Radio. "We have to advance in peace because the alternative could be very, very grave... a return to hate, violence and bloodshed, which no one wants."

"We want to encourage the prime minister to show him that a large majority of the Israeli public wants him to return [from London] with peace and to advance in the peace process," Mr. Kimche added.

Meanwhile, leaders of Jewish settlers in the occupied territories and nationalist members of Israel's governing coalition agreed over the weekend to work to topple the government if Mr. Netanyahu agreed to give in to the U.S. demands, the Maariv newspaper reported Monday.

Those involved in the threat reportedly included leaders of the National Religious Party, which accounts for nine of the Netanyahu coalition's 61 seats in the 120-member parliament.

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'This baseball' is a good game — Fergie

CHICAGO (AP) — It wasn't quite cricket, so don't blame Fergie for being a bit in the dark. Sarah Ferguson, Britain's Duchess of York, passed on a chance to lead Chicago Cubs fans in the traditional rendition of "Take Me Out to the Ball Game" during the seventh-inning. But it wasn't because of snootiness or stage fright. "I don't know the words," she said, laughing. Ferguson, making her first visit to an American baseball park, agreed to stand in the press booth with announcer Steve Stone and wave to fans during the song. She also said she enjoyed the game known as America's pastime. "It's a good game, this baseball. I like it," she said.

Clinton at star-studded fund-raiser

LOS ANGELES (AFP) — President Bill Clinton joined actor Michael Douglas and DreamWorks film studio co-founder Jeffrey Katzenberg at a glitzy, \$10,000-per-couple dinner in Hollywood Sunday. The political fund-raiser was expected to generate about \$1 million for the president's Democratic Party. Film director Oliver Stone and actors Ted Danson and Mary Steenburgen were among the stars at the event. Unable to attend but still writing checks were actor Tom Cruise and his wife, actress Nicole Kidman, organisers said.

Good movie roles hard to get — Bacall

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Lauren Bacall may have been nominated for an Oscar and a Golden Globe last year, but she says good movie roles are hard to come by these days. "They are not writing wonderful parts for women," she said in Los Angeles Times. "That is the sad truth. They were certainly not breaking down the doors for me, anyway." Bacall, 73, won acclaim for "The Mirror Has Two Faces." She'll make a two-episode guest appearance on television's "Chicago Hope" beginning this week, playing a wealthy artist with a brain tumour. The part is worthwhile because "it's not a stereotype," she said. "I am not playing somebody's mother or somebody's aunt."

Kermit & Co. to build environmental awareness

BATON ROUGE (AP) — Harry Connick Jr., Aaron Neville, chef Paul Prudhomme and Kermit the Frog are teaming up to build environmental awareness about the problems Louisiana has with coastal erosion. The state loses 65 to 90 square-kilometre of coastline a year, which bothers Kermit because he has thousands of cousins living in coastal swamps, bayous and marshes. "For all of us who are lower on the food chain, we thank you" for helping save the wetlands, Kermit says in one of the 30-second public service announcements to air on television.

Chelsea's boyfriend spotted at church

PALO ALTO (AFP) — A tall, clean-cut young man spotted at Chelsea Clinton's side during a church service here Sunday has been romantically linked to the 18-year-old First Daughter. Chelsea, her first year of studies at Stanford University drawing to a close, is dating the young man, a fellow Stanford student, ABC News said. The young man with chiselled features and an athletic build was Matthew Pierce, 20, a third-year student majoring in religious studies from a suburb of Dallas, Texas, ABC said, citing Stanford University sources.

U.S. invites for Wash

ALBRIGHT: This invitation on bas

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Mr. Netanyahu